

KIM TARA PHILLIS VOLKAMER

THE ROLE OF SURF TOURISM ON
PERCEIVED WELL- BEING



2023

KIM TARA PHILLIS VOLKAMER

THE ROLE OF SURF TOURISM ON PERCEIVED WELL- BEING

Master in Tourism Organisations Management

Supervised by:
Professora Doutora Dora Agapito
Professora Doutora Bernardete Sequeira



2023

THE ROLE OF SURF TOURISM ON PERCEIVED WELL- BEING

Declaro ser a autor deste trabalho, que é original e inédito. Autores e trabalhos consultados estão devidamente citados no texto e constam da listagem de referencias incluída.

Kim Tara Phillis Volkamer

.....

(assinatura)

© **Copyright** Kim Tara Phillis Volkamer

A Universidade do Algarve reserva para si o direito, em conformidade com o disposto no Código do Direito de Autor e dos Direitos Conexos, de arquivar, reproduzir e publicar a obra, independentemente do meio utilizado, bem como de a divulgar através de repositórios científicos e de admitir a sua cópia e distribuição para fins meramente educacionais ou de investigação e não comerciais, conquanto seja dado o devido crédito ao autor e editor respetivos.

AGRADECIMENTOS

À minha mãe.

Ao Paolo pelo apoio e paciência.

À Professora Dora Agapito e à Professora Bernardete Sequeira pelas orientações e conselhos, pela motivação e pela exigência.

RESUMO

Nas últimas décadas, o turismo de surf surgiu como uma área significativa de estudo, entrelaçando esporte, lazer e bem-estar. Com base nos trabalhos fundacionais de Zhang e Chen (2022) e Seligman (2012), esta tese visa explorar o profundo impacto do turismo de surf no bem-estar percebido, mergulhando em suas múltiplas dimensões.

Seligman (2012) postulou a importância do bem-estar na sociedade moderna, enfatizando o seu papel além do mero prazer hedônico. Corroborando essa perspectiva, a pesquisa atual oferece algumas considerações relevantes na perspectiva da gestão sobre as dimensões eudaimônicas e hedônicas do bem-estar no âmbito do turismo de surf. O potencial transformador do surf, tanto como esporte quanto como experiência, está no centro deste estudo.

A metodologia qualitativa do estudo, inspirada nas abordagens de Ryan e Deci (2006), envolveu entrevistas semiestruturadas com 25 participantes. As suas narrativas, ricas em insights experienciais, sublinharam a essência transformadora do surf. A partir dos conceitos de bem-estar subjetivo de Diener (1984), relatos dos participantes destacaram o oceano, o ambiente natural e a natureza inerentemente social da comunidade como catalisadores para o aprimoramento do bem-estar. Desde a emoção de surfar uma onda até a camaradagem dentro da comunidade de surf, surge um conjunto de fatores que contribuem coletivamente para a elevação da felicidade e contentamento.

Além do individual, a pesquisa investiga as implicações sociais e ambientais mais amplas do turismo de surf. Ecoando as descobertas de Murphey e Bernal (2008), o estudo ressalta os benefícios multifacetados do turismo de surf, abrangendo dimensões económicas, ambientais e socioculturais. O crescimento florescente do turismo de surf não só catalisa vias económicas, desde marcas de vestuário à cobertura da mídia, mas também molda identidades, promove a sensação de pertença e fortalece a conexão com a natureza.

Considerando a história do surf, a tese inspira-se em estudos como Martin & Assenov (2012), marcando suas origens no Havaí e traçando sua proliferação global. O surf atual transcende as regiões costeiras tradicionais, com inovações introduzindo piscinas e

jardins com ondas artificiais em territórios sem litoral. Essa expansão sinaliza a metamorfose do surf de um mero desporto para um estilo de vida abrangente, ressoando em demografias diversas.

Situado no domínio mais amplo do turismo desportivo, o turismo de surf surge como uma interseção única de recreação e experiências transformadoras. A profundidade experiencial das narrativas dos participantes revelou uma jornada de autodescobrimento, resiliência e crescimento pessoal. Ao interagir com as ondas, os participantes frequentemente confrontaram medos, superaram desafios e emergiram com maior autoconhecimento e confiança. Essa jornada transformadora, amplificada dentro do ambiente acolhedor de um acampamento de surf, emergiu como um tema saliente.

A nível sociocultural, a pesquisa iluminou a dinâmica das interações locais e globais em destinos de turismo de surf. À medida que os turistas de surf globais imergem em culturas locais, há uma troca mútua de valores, tradições e perspetivas. Esse diálogo intercultural enriquece tanto o visitante quanto o anfitrião, fomentando uma comunidade global unida pelo amor compartilhado pelas ondas.

No entanto, como qualquer indústria emergente, o turismo de surf enfrenta desafios. O excesso de turismo, a degradação ambiental e a comodificação cultural são preocupações prementes. O estudo de Ryan e Deci (2001), propõe um quadro sustentável para o turismo de surf. Este quadro enfatiza a participação comunitária, a administração ambiental e a sensibilidade cultural.

Em essência, a dissertação oferece insights de gestão para campos de surf e decisores em torno desta atividade. Fatores como fatores de participação, percepção de bem-estar eudaimónico, percepção do corpo, percepção de stress e recuperação, percepção de experiência hedónica, estímulos externos e experiência global são identificados e analisados. À medida que o turismo de surf traça sua trajetória de crescimento, este detém a promessa de prosperidade económica, enriquecimento cultural e bem-estar individual. No entanto, essa promessa depende de decisões informadas, práticas responsáveis e um profundo respeito pelo oceano e suas comunidades. O trabalho lança as bases para pesquisas futuras e crescimento responsável no na área do turismo de surf em contexto de campo de férias e impacto no bem-estar.

Palavras Chave: turismo desportivo, turismo de surf, bem-estar hedónico, bem-estar eudaimónico, transformação

ABSTRACT

This exploratory research aims to understand the impact of surf tourism on perceived well-being. During the past decades surf tourism has seen a significant growth globally and also took part in discussion around well-being. Considering the increasing attention of perceived well-being in research and organizations' practice, this study explores the role of surfing as a sport and the experience while staying in a surf camp and the possible impact it can have on an individual regarding eudaimonic and hedonic well-being.

To gain more data about personal experiences and insights of those who join a surf camp, this study used a qualitative approach. Semi-structured interviews with 25 individuals between 28 and 45 years old were conducted in a surf camp in Lagos, Portugal. The participants were purposely sampled based on specific factors which align with the research objective.

The findings of this research underscore the well-being related benefits of surf tourism. The personal descriptions emphasise the transformative power of this activity and experience within a surf camp, taking into consideration the ocean and natural environment, same as the social aspect of this environment. The results suggest these aspects as catalysers for enhanced well-being. Notably, multiple factors, from surf community to just the joy surfing a wave, contribute to a higher level of perceived happiness and contentment. Specific themes are identified and analysed such as: factors for participating in a surf camp, perception of self-growth, body awareness, perception of stress and restoration, perception of hedonic experience, external stimuli, and overall experience.

The research considers broader implications of surf tourism on perceived well-being, highlighting potential economic, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits. Furthermore, the study shows the significance of surf tourism, impacting also shaping identities, fostering a sense of belonging and enhanced connection to nature.

Lastly the study provides recommendations for future research as surf tourism and the impact on well-being are still an unexplored research area. Implications for management of surf camps and related decision-makers are also offered.

Keywords: sport tourism, surf tourism, hedonic well-being, eudaimonic well-being, transformation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	XII
LIST OF FIGURES.....	XIII
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
2.1. Sport tourism	4
2.2. Surfing	5
2.3. Surf tourism	6
2.4. The surf tourist and camps	10
2.5. Sport and surf tourism experience.....	11
2.6. Well-being	12
2.6.1. A definition of well-being.....	13
2.6.2. Concepts of well-being	13
2.7. The need for well- being and tourism.....	18
2.8. Surf tourism and well- being	19
2.8.1. Well-being in adventure tourism.....	20
2.8.2. Well-being in nature- based tourism	21
2.8.3. Well- being in surf tourism	24
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....	27
3.1. Qualitative approach.....	27
3.2. Interviews	28
3.3. Sampling and selection.....	31
3.4. Data Collection.....	32
3.5. Analysis and data interpretation	32

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	34
4.1. Sample Characterization.....	34
4.2. Thematic analysis	36
4.2.1. Factors of participation	38
4.2.2. Perception of self- growth (eudaimonia).....	42
4.2.3. Body awareness.....	46
4.2.4. Perception of stress and restoration.....	48
4.2.5. Perception of hedonic experience	52
4.2.6. External stimuli	55
4.2.7. Evaluation of overall experience.....	58
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION	61
5.1. Main Findings of the study.....	61
5.2. Practical implications for tourism organizations management.....	69
5.3. Limitations of the study.....	70
5.3.1. Sample Size and Composition	71
5.3.2. Self-Reported Data.....	71
5.3.3. Lack of Control Group	71
5.3.4. Cultural and Geographic Context.....	72
5.3.5. Qualitative Approach	72
5.3.6. Potential Themes Not Explored	73
5.4. Suggestions for future research	73
CHAPTER 6. REFERENCES.....	75
7. APPENDICIES.....	83
Appendix I. Informed consent prior to interviews	84
Appendix II. Interview example I9M.....	86

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 3.1. Interview guide	30
Table 4.1. Profile of respondents	35
Table 4.2. Thematics, categories and subcategories	37

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 2.1. The concept of life satisfaction in a subjective well-being framework	15
Figure 2.2. Core dimensions of psychological well-being and their theoretical foundations	17

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Surfing is the act of sliding down a wave on a surfboard, but also includes the simple act of not using any equipment. After being known as a sport following old Hawaiian traditions, surf sport evolved towards a well-known activity around the world (Martin & Assenov, 2012).

During the past decades surf tourism has increased internationally and is advocated to provide an enhancing share towards economic development. Whereas in its beginning, the participation in the sport was only disposable in specific, for surfing famous destinations as Australia or Hawaii, nowadays several spots around the globe were discovered and even the development of artificial waves, makes surf tourism available even in landlocked countries (Murphey & Bernal, 2008). Therefore, surf tourism spreads in developing countries and contributes to great economic growth in the form of increasing surf tourist numbers. There are several subordinated economic elements contributing towards its growth as surf services like camps or schools, equipment and material, events, clothing, and sponsorships (Murphey & Bernal, 2008).

These facts make surf tourism a multidimensional product, which can be roughly associated with adventure tourism, nature-based tourism and lastly health or wellness tourism. Broadly, it can be defined as a sport or recreational activity with strong dependence on lifestyle associations, environment, and social belonging (Moutinho, Dionísio & Leal, 2007). Martin and Assenov (2012) divide the surf market into three sectors. Firstly, there are independent surf tourists, travelling to mostly remote surf destinations in small groups or families, and organizing the trip themselves. Inspired by this group, there are surf tourists participating in organized surf trips. Both mentioned types are not in the focus of this work. This dissertation focuses on surf travelers with little or no experience, who are depending on the service of surf schools or camps to fulfil their experience.

Especially in the southern part of Europe, surf tourism is an essential part of tourism, where numerous surf camps, hostels, or surf schools can be found. Many of them are based in the Algarve region, Portugal. Surf tourism contributes towards the economic growth in Portugal and is beginning steadily increasing (Martin & Assenov, 2012). Only a few authors address the economic impact of surfing, and if they do so, their focus lies mostly on developing countries (Martin & Assenov, 2012). Within Europe and especially in Portugal, surf tourism and its economic and social impact is mostly unexplored.

Simultaneous to the development of this niche tourism, characteristics within consumer behavior changed in the last decade. Recently, the level of awareness, not only for sustainable behavior within tourist experiences but also for personal and individual development and an enhancement of a healthy lifestyle, increased (Bencsik, Horvath-Csikos, Juhasz & Csanadi, 2019). This may be in a part explained by recent pandemic effects and changes the mindset of tourists. Tourists now not only seek sun and beach time but look for more life-changing and exceptional experiences during their holidays. Shortly said, the demand for enhancing well-being while traveling increased (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). This work explores different types of well-being as physical, hedonic, and eudemonic (Seligman, 2012).

Following up the steady increase of surf tourism, this study explores the social and individual effect surf tourism brings, especially towards the different concepts of well-being. The focus lies on the characterization of influencing aspects of the sport in combination with perceived well-being of tourists.

Few studies address this topic and express the positive impact on health and well-being from the participation in surfing. In some studies, the target audience is children (Hignett et al., 2017; Godfrey et al. 2015) and American war veterans (Caddick et. al., 2015). The surf activity is either recurring or therapeutic, but not thematizing if this short-term experience during a holiday can impact well-being. There is some evidence in literature that surf tourism can impact positively perceived well-being (Román, Borja, Uyarra & Pouso, 2022), but the topic is still widely unknown.

To the best of the author knowledge, no study addressed the role of surf tourism (surf camp experiences) on perceived well-being of adults.

This dissertation aims to contribute to address the identified research gap. Therefore, the main goal of this research is to understand, to which extent surf tourism, through surf camp experience, can contribute towards perceived well-being.

Accordingly, the specific research questions are as followed:

Q1: What are the main motivational factors for individuals staying in a surf camp?

Q2: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived eudaimonic well-being?

Q3: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived physical well-being?

Q4: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived hedonic well-being?

Q5: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact individuals' level of restoration?

Q6: What are the main environmental factors influencing well-being during a surf experience
camp?

Q7: How participants evaluate their overall experience in a surf camp against their expectations?

The present study firstly reviews literature on the topic under research. The activity itself, surf tourism and its development, concepts of well-being and tourism experience elements contributing towards enhanced well-being will be examined. The methodology includes information about location of research, characterization of the sample, the survey and lastly the data analysis method used. The results then will be presented and discussed, followed by the exposure of conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Sport tourism

Sport was declared a form of tourism by The World Tourism Organization (Higham & Hinch, 2002). To clarify this term, it can be subclassified to “tourism” itself and the definition of sport. Although definitions are dependent upon the purpose of information usage about the tourists, the following is perhaps the most common used. Tourism therefore contains 3 dimensions regarding a) the individual being classified as a tourist, meaning the departure and return to someone’s place of residence, b) the temporary component of a minimum abstinence of 24 hours and c) the purpose of the travel (Hinch & Higham, 2002).

Sport as a physical activity can be traced back to the 18th century and has its origin in England, whereas now a common understanding defines it as an “individual or group activity pursued for exercise or pleasure, often taking a competitive form” (p. 47, Smith & Collins, 1988). Within the years more approaches of sport evolved, as the game approach (Loy, 1968) which defines a sport a game following specific rules and requirements, the concept of participation (De Knop, 1990) which declares sport as an activity without any exclusivity and the recreational aspect of sport.

When combining sport and tourism, clearly a lot of aspects are identical and the two inseparables. Hinch and Haghham (2002) mention the urgency to distinguish between sport tourism and tourism sport. Sport tourism includes travel for non- commercial activities and the participation in physical activities for leisure as a primary activity, whereas tourism sport can be defined as people travelling for sport in a competitive or recreational manner constituting only of secondary interest.

Since the 1990’s the recognition of sport tourism is constantly evolving and can be broadly divided into three pursuits of travelling. Firstly, the individual is driven by the active participation in a sport, secondly the main reason to travel is the speciation of a

sport event, and lastly the main occasion is moving driven by nostalgia, which in literature is the least researched (Gibson & Fairley, 2022).

There are several conceptual approaches providing insights in driving factors for sport participation and travelling. There has been a noticeable shift in the understanding of self-benefits of active participation and a recent focus on well-being and health in sport tourism (Mirehie & Gibson, 2020).

Sport tourism itself is considered as one of the fastest evolving sectors in national and international tourism because of its multifaceted beneficial impact not only on socially, but also on economy and environment. Registering main advantages as increased cultural identity and social interaction opportunities, the further development of sport tourism should be supported (Hritz & Ross, 2010). In the past decades, sport tourism got disregarded, criticizing that research mainly thematizes the economic impacts of sport events in a very descriptive form (Gibson & Fairley, 2022).

2.2. Surfing

Surfing in its most original form, probably exists since the first human swimming in the sea, accidentally catching a wave and riding to shore with the body. This fact allows to consider body-surfing as the oldest form of wave catching. In the modern world, surfing is concentrating on the act of standing up on a surfboard and following the wave down the line, executing different maneuvers. Literature has indicated that its roots can be found in Polynesia around 1778, but there is no exact date (Finney & Houston, 1996). Following the history about Captain Hook though, this character was the first one admiring the local communities riding waves on old wood sticks. In the surfing scene, this marks the source of surfing: Hawaii. Through steady internationalization, people began to express their interest in learning this form of sport and leisure and, therefore, import it into their countries of origin (Finney & Houston, 1996). Hawaiian Duke Kahanamoku is nowadays declared as the official origin of surf, who brought the sport *inter alia* to Australia and New Zealand.

The physical requirement of one, who wants to participate in this sport, varies a lot depending on the type and board one wants to use. Due to material and technical improvements and adjustments in the past decades, and the variation of short boards or longboards, the surf sport now is appropriate for all age groups (Scarfe, Elwany, Mead & Black, 2003). The acceptance of differentiation within the surf groups changed from a narrow- minded understanding of only young, strong, and mostly masculine people being able to surf, to more and more female, mid- aged or even retired people participating (Wheaton, 2019).

In 2022, surfing is not only a big sport itself in famous destinations as Hawaii or Australia anymore. It spread to almost all countries with water access and a coastline providing waves worldwide. With the swift and inexorable progression of technical innovations, even countries without access to the sea offer artificial waves in the form of wave pools or wave gardens (Borne, 2018; Murphey & Bernal, 2008). It is a definite sign that surfing is more than a sport, rather a lifestyle (Roberts & Ponting, 2020). Worth noting is the relevant contribution to economy, not only related to artificial waves as tourist attractions next to the regular destinations for surfing, but also clothing brands, surf supply and equipment, events and competitions, media coverage and surf schools and camps (Murphey & Bernal, 2008).

2.3. Surf tourism

Surf tourism can be defined after the Tourism New South Wales (2009) as:

“An activity which takes place 40 km or more from the person's place of residence, where surfing or attending a surfing event are the primary purpose for travel. Surf tourists stay at their destinations for at least one night or can undertake their visit as a day trip” (p.3).

Another definition by Dolnicar and Fluker (2003) characterizes surf tourism as population traveling with the main purpose being active involved in the surf sport, either personally or through institutions or schools. The temporal component implies a

minimum stay of one night, when traveling to a domestic location not more than 180 nights, and internationally less than 12 months.

In the 1960's the group Waikiki Beachboys, including Duke Kahanamoku, eventually set the roots of an emerging surf tourism development. They used surfing as a tool to attract and animate tourists, while teaching them how to surf the mellow waves of the North Shore of Oahu. This phenomenon then spread to California where it was mainly intending to communicate a new surf image and promote the real estate development close to the coast. It was probably not until 1959 with the movie "Gidget", followed by the film "The endless summer" in 1962, that surf tourism became more popular. The documentary introduced the search for the perfect wave around the world, internationally, to other surfers and non- surfers and eventually spread the desire of surf tourism (Martin & Assenov, 2012). From these movies a whole new type of traveler emerged - the traveler who seeks to locate new surf spots in remote areas in the Pacific and declare themselves as "soul" or "free surfers" (Doering, 2018). One decade later, this approach was established into a commercialized surf tourism industry.

Especially the surf tourism in Australia ignited a prompt development in the area, erasing a more commercial, professionalized, and competitive aspect of the sport (Doering, 2018). It was not long before the sport draw business' awareness and some of the biggest Australian brands like Billabong and Rip Curl were established. Improvements and adjustments to the material and boards made the possibilities of surfing even greater and transformed it to the high skilled and competitive sport it is nowadays (Doering, 2018).

Surf tourism got further commercialized with the sponsoring of big surf events worldwide and especially the athletes, competitors, or free surfers themselves. Brands advertised with surfers chasing waves around the world, promoting the "traveling surf lifestyle" and thus enhanced the profitability of surf tourism (Doering, 2018).

Nowadays, with more than 10 million surfers worldwide, surf tourism makes a great part of international tourism and especially adventure tourism (Dolnicar & Fluker, 2003). The tourism sector brings economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits to coastlines on all continents and recently especially to the island states in the Indian and Pacific Ocean (Buckley, 2002, O'Brien, 2013).

This phenomenon might have been stressed even more through the incorporation of the surf sport in the Olympic Games 2020 in Tokyo. Other than criticism and apathy among the surfing population it aroused the suspicion of another attempt of commercializing surfing even more and enhance a development in surf tourism especially in Asia (Doering, 2018).

Ponting and O'Brian (2015) stated that the surf tourism contributes approximately a third billion USD per year towards economic value, which probably is underestimated due to the difficulty of recording the economic contribution of smaller surf businesses in remote areas. This not only includes surf tour operators, but supporting products as clothing, souvenirs, events, and schools, whereas the further differentiation of these promises an acceleration in the industry (Moutinho, Dionisio & Leal, 2007).

Travelers with the aim to find empty surf spots move to remote destinations, which often results in malicious socioeconomic impacts on the host community (Martin & Assenov, 2014). Mentionable positive impacts on local communities are improvements of life quality, distinguished through higher employment within jobs related to the surf tourism and the chance to learn and improve their language skills mostly in English (Towner & Davies, 2019).

Although this sector has a promising growth rate it also brings disadvantages to remote and more accessible surf destinations. Local communities in less developed countries suffer, just to mention a few, from dishonor in the line-up initiated by tourists (Knaap & Vanneste, 2021), higher rate of rapes and violent behavior (Towner & Davies, 2019), alcohol and drug abuse (Canosa, Graham & Wilson, 2019) and fear of uncertainty due to its seasonality and demand (Mielly & Peticca-Harris, 2022). It therefore needs a better management to enhance sustainability and degrade poverty (O'Brien & Ponting, 2013).

Surf tourism is dependent on natural resources, as it is a limited public good, and experiences issues of carrying capacity (Buckley, 2002), which stresses the need of sustainable management (Martin & Assenov, 2012). Overcrowding in many surf-breaks leads to "conflicts with social, economic and environmental implications" (Mach & Ponting, 2018). With more people and commercial influences within the surf

destinations, the value of the experience for tourists decreases and so must, at some point, the price for supplementary products as accommodations or services (Buckley, 2002).

2.4. The surf tourist and camps

With over 10 million surfers worldwide it is difficult to define the average surfer and only few studies thematize this topic. Dolcinar and Fluker (2008), as well as Barbieri and Sotomayor (2013), attribute the surfer within an age range around 30 to 35 years, with a profound level of education and a high income.

Experienced surfers travel mostly in small groups or with families, what makes them a client with a high amount of money to spend in a very limited time (Buckley, 2002). As their tourist experience is especially depending on the quality and quantity of waves in the destination, they are, other than most of the tourism product, time independent and are highly likely to return to a destination, once there are familiar with the spot (Dolnicar & Fluker, 2003). According to Hritz and Franzidis (2018), surfers' main source of information are family and friends, which makes social media an important tool. As for all types of surfers, their willingness to travel for the sport increases together with their motivations of personal improvement. Surfing is a challenging sport in the beginning, which needs time to hone and where the learning process seems never-ending (Hritz & Franzidis, 2018).

The industry does not only want to address experienced or intermediate surfers, but the outnumbering tourists with no or little experience, who are dependent on tour operators, surf schools, or camps to undergo the experience. The supply of surf providers, firstly found in the 1970's (Nourbakhsh, 2008), is now a multi-faceted industry, providing numerous segments, and targeting especially beginner surfers (Martin & Assenov, 2012).

Beginners or intermediate surfers need lessons and access to material in a safe and controlled environment, which can be found in surf camps (Martin & Assenov, 2012). Surf camps are a crucial, highly competitive segment within the surf tourism industry as service providers and worldwide expanding annually (Brochado, Stoleriu & Lupu, 2018).

2.5. Sport and surf tourism experience

Tourists often seek relaxation and detachment from the usual during their holidays but being in a different country also holds the opportunity to explore a new culture, to spend time with locals, try exotic food or test new activities. Overall, the tourism product is not a simple commodity, but an experience. There are numerous features shaping the tourism product to a fastidious one, such as complementary and interdependency of components, immateriality, uno- acto- principle or even the integration of the tourist as a non-controllable factor (Bieger & Beritelli, 2018).

The tourism experience begins with the thought or the decision to travel before anything is purchased yet. During the planning process, the experience of the tourist can be influenced by several factors, as the availability and offer in the desired destination, booking processes and user-friendliness, etc. Once arrived at a destination the experience is affected by external factors as weather and encounters, sensations and perception, and factors directly related to the product purchased (Godovykh & Tasci, 2020).

Due to its versatility, factors like motivation, emotions or environment bias the expected outcome of the tourist's experience, which makes sport tourism a very complex product (Weed & Bull, 2008). The surf tourism experience is intricated (Zhang & Chen, 2022). Complementizing Urry's concept of the gaze theory in tourism, Zhang and Chen (2022) introduce the embodied process of surfing tourism experience. As surfing being an extreme sport, which demands a high level of physical fitness, the integration of the body within the experience is crucial. Zhang and Chen (2022) define an embodied process of the surf experience as including aspects such as a) the perception of visual, aural, smell, taste and touch senses, b) the awakening, c) the embodied emotion and d) the embodied extension of the surf tourism experience. The embodied awakening thematizes the desire of tourists to gain a new body perception, which differs from the usual sport experiences. Surfing is a demanding sport, especially for beginners and entails not only special body techniques, but body consciousness and awareness. Physical reactions trigger emotional perceptions (Zhang & Chen, 2022).

Being in a mostly unknown and unpredictable element as the sea, with its currents and power, handling an unknown equipment, surfing can cause high level of endorphin and fatigue among especially beginners. The sport is learned mainly in the beginning in a group and later the surfer is in constant communication with like-minded people. This extensive aspect makes an important part of the experience. In addition, the tourism experience executed in nature. Being outside in the fresh air contrasts with the everyday-life and leads to a repatriation to primal attributes (Zhang & Chen, 2022). Initially surfing was not only a sport, but a part of culture. Zhang and Chen (2022) call attention to the fact that surf tourism experience has the potential to increase self-generation, a new perception of themselves also in relation to others and examine relationships.

The concept of embodiment therefore facilitates the complexity of surfing as a tourist experience and outlines benefits of the sport, as being vision broadening, pressure releasing, promoting physical and mental improvement, self-motivation, better cognition, higher level of satisfaction and reduce anxiety (Zhang & Chen, 2022).

2.6. Well-being

In 2011, the United Nations (UN) announced that well-being should be a “fundamental human goal” and that the economic development should follow a supporting approach. In fact, to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” is one of the 17 sustainable development goals 2030 of the UN (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/health/>). The goal is not only concentrating on prevention and avoidance of death and diseases same as the promotion of health care in developing countries, but on worldwide health and well-being in all countries (Arora & Mishra, 2019). In addition, the UN declared the 20th of March officially to the International Day of Happiness with the aim to promote well-being worldwide (Blanchflower & Oswald, 2011). This development demonstrates a shift in the understanding of important indices in socio-economy towards a more multidimensional approach, not only considering standard factors like productivity, disease rates, GDP, but including happiness and perceived well-being of the population.

2.6.1. A definition of well-being

The timeliness research in well-being has since then steadily evolved in different fields of interest as economics, psychology, medicine, sociology, politics, and management. Well-being is understood as a broad term, which every area targets methodologically different than the other. Often the term “well-being” is aligned with “happiness” (Seligman, 2012), “health” or “wellness”. Health, and mainly “mental health”, focuses on the avoidance and prevention of diseases, which then ultimately can contribute towards a higher level of well-being (Herrman, Saxena & Moodie, 2005).

The variety of studies regarding the topic, underlines the multidimensionality of well-being and advocates it a construct consisting of imbricating subjective and objective factors in an individual’s life (Wiklund, Nikolaev, Shir, Foo & Bradley, 2019). In general, research defines well-being as living a fulfilling life, the maintenance of positive relationships, positive emotions, and good living conditions (Seligman, 2012). Concepts alter, depending on their inclusion of internal and external factors, the individual and independent evaluation of those and the objective of the measures (Wiklund et al., 2019).

2.6.2. Concepts of well-being

Psychologists such as Diener (1984) focused their research on subjective well-being (SWB). Subjective well-being is understood as experience of a high amount of positive affect, the absence of negativity and a high level of contentment with one’s life (Ryan & Deci, 2006). The term well-being is accompanied by subjectivity as each person rates their level of satisfaction for themselves, which can therefore differ on individual preferences and expectations. In prior studies, the term of SWB was often equated with “happiness”. Kahneman, Diener and Schwarz (1999) associated the term of well-being with a more hedonistic approach more related to pleasure, which marks one of the two predominant approaches around the concept of well-being (Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2001). The second approach gives room for an integration of well-being

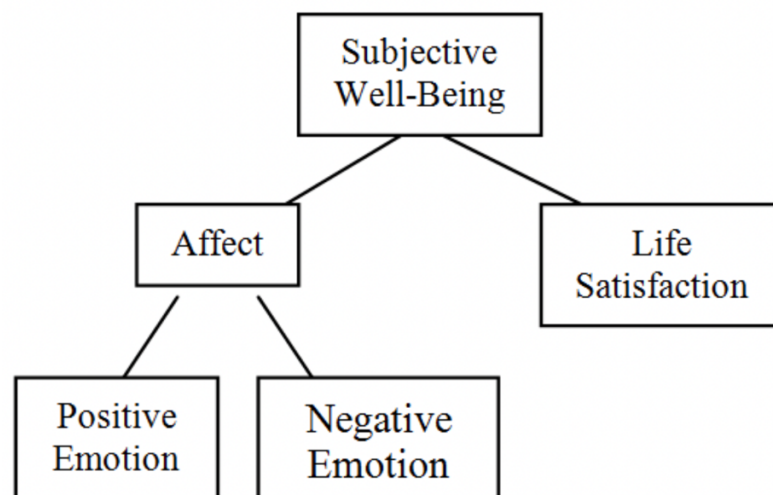
in a more eudemonic perspective (Waterman, 1993). The first approach consists of pleasant and unpleasant feelings and a judgment about life satisfaction on both cognitive and emotional level. The eudemonic perspective, which finds its source back in the Greek mythology (Ryan & Deci, 2006), is more related to self-growth and individual happiness. Eudaimonia refers to subjective experiences with the aim to live a full-filled life of human excellence. Experiences which can be derived from eudemonic well-being, could be self-actualization, vitality or personal development. Both understandings of the term depend on a disparate understanding of the human nature (Ryan & Deci, 2006) and are said to be substantial overlapping.

There are other studies approaches towards well-being that are neither subclassified as hedonic nor eudemonic, like the state of flow (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993). Flow identifies a state of being, in which an individual is actively participating in what they are doing, using their capabilities in the best way possible adjusted to the task. The task should be perfectly challenging the individual to provide improvements regarding their skill, which most of the times is accompanied by an increase of engagement. The concept of flow is indirectly connected to the conceptualization of “flourishing”, which combines both the hedonic and eudaimonic approach (Keyes, 2002) and thematizes the successful achievement of set goals. The concept of “PERMA” (Seligman, 2012) is another approach towards well-being, combining positive emotions, engagement or flow, relationships, meaning and achievement. Each one of the elements itself can, when realized, contribute positively towards well-being.

2.6.2.1. The hedonic approach

The approach towards hedonic well-being (HWB) emphasizes individual life assessment on an emotional and cognitive level, consisting of pleasant and unpleasant feelings and life satisfaction (Tov, 2018). Also known as subjective well-being (Diener, 1984), the concept refers to a self-evaluation whether a person is living a successful and happy life or not. Subjective well-being though does not specify which things in life are the ones to thrive for (Tov, 2018).

Figure 2.1. The concept of life satisfaction in a subjective well-being framework



Source: The Concept of Life Satisfaction in a Subjective Well-Being Framework (Diener, 1984)

HWB can be partitioned into an affective and cognitive part (Diener, 1984). Affective well-being results in the awareness of individual and subjective positive or negative emotions, whereas cognitive well-being describes the ability of an individual to evaluate life satisfaction compared to a perfect state (Tov, 2018). Both components are interfering with each other. The accomplishment of specific objectives will most likely evoke positive feelings and reverse. On the other hand, positive emotions caused by specific situations may result in an increase of life satisfaction. Factors influencing cognitive

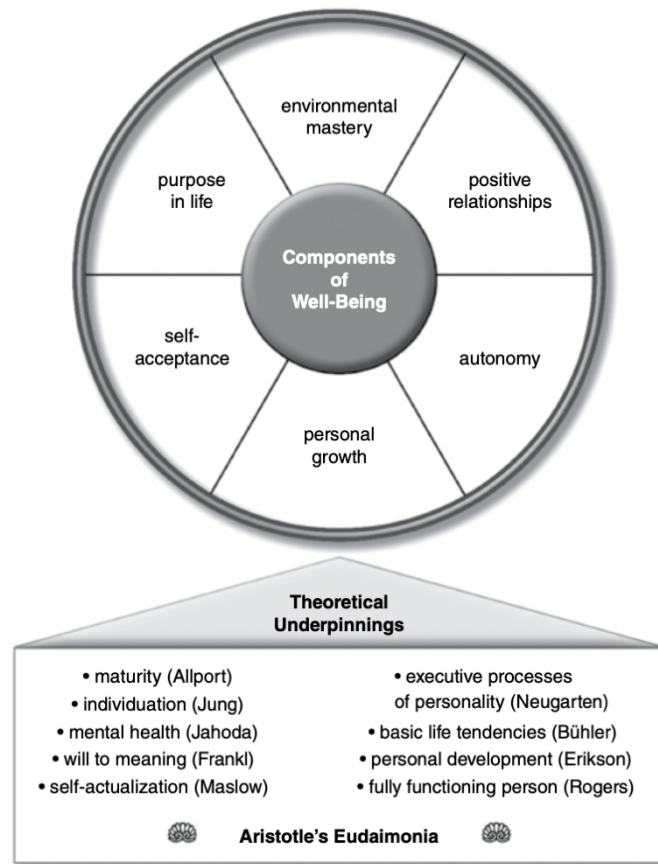
well-being seemed to be more resilient (Luhmann, Hawkley, Eid, & Cacioppo, 2012) and consist of socio-economic factors as income or employment. Schimmack, Schupp and Wagner (2008) exemplify that affective well-being components refer mostly to situational and emotional influences and moreover vary depending on the character traits.

Tov (2018) distinguishes between aspects of affective and cognitive well-being. Valence, the degree of which an experience is positive or negative perceived, the frequency and intensity of an emotion, level of occurrence, cultural background, and the degree of engagement are aspects of affective well-being. Cognitive well-being can be associated with the challenge of accessing all information and therefore the difficulty of a comprehensive assessment and the structure of how to evaluate a life (Tov, 2018).

2.6.2.2. The eudaimonic approach

Waterman (1993) conceptualizes eudaimonia as a constant process to realize one's true nature, fulfilling potentials and life live up to the inherent intentions of ones, which gives a more sociological perceptive on the topic probably based on Aristotle perception of the human and evolution in the 20th century. For growth and development there are specific desires and needs that must be fulfilled to reach one's full potential (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Within eudaimonic perception, the human is a content-rich being, whose purpose is the revealing and management of its content, it must be therefore clarified that well-being is more than experiencing happiness and satisfaction, thus psychological well-being is depended on numerous factors which would have been excluded following only a hedonistic perspective (Ryan & Deci, 2006).

Figure 2.2. Core dimensions of psychological well-being and their theoretical foundations



Source: Core dimensions of psychological well-being and their theoretical foundations (Ryff, 2018)

One of the most traditional concepts of eudaimonic well-being is probably published by Ryff (1989). The author approach towards and psychological well-being theorized self-acceptance, personal growth, relatedness, autonomy, relationships, environmental interaction, and the purpose in life as the six features of psychological well-being which each serve as subscales, as shown in Figure 2. Environmental mastery refers to the active participation and anticipation in environmental surroundings as a crucial factor of psychological well-being. Maintenance of positive relationships thematize mainly the ability to love and to be loved as a human need after Maslow (Ryff, 1989) and the ability to keep deep friendships and identification with others. Personal growth is one of the

factors, mentioned in numerous studies (Voigt et al., 2010), stressing the achieving of personal potential and self-realization. Ryff (2018) outlines that the level of well-being can be influenced by several developments, both by external and internal forms. With an advanced age, personal growth and purpose in life seems to decrease, which eventually can have a negative impact on longevity and health. The level of well-being is also directly linked to the economic status of an individual. Social inequality, as like lower income or education, is an important component of enhancement of happiness (Ryff, 2018). As most of the existing concepts of eudaimonic well-being focus on the western culture, the conceptual applicability for different cultures must be discussed (Ryff, 2018).

In other studies, eudaimonia is associated with peoples' narratives, which refers to the organization of experiences in a social context. Therefore, eudaimonia contains pleasure, meaningfulness, and individual comprehension (Bauer, Graham, Lauber & Lynch, 2019). This ultimately is related to fulfilling individual potential through meaningful experiences, which can lead to self-realization and personal growth according to one's values (Lv & Wu, 2021; Voigt et al., 2010).

2.7. The need for well- being and tourism

Tourism is a dynamic sector with constant changes. In the last decades, the concept of holidays just to relax and rest has changed. Today, people are looking increasingly for authentic travel experiences that can provide excitement and adventure. This is largely because today's societies have an increased interest in the environment as well as in the aspiration for a healthy lifestyle (World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2012).

Since the end of the 20th century, more and more tourists turn away from mainstream all-inclusive tourism and seek more nature-based experiences (Pessot, Spoladore, Zangiacomì & Sacco, 2021). According to Pernecky and Johnston (2006), these new age tourists are more focused on bodily improvement through physical activities, relaxing, renewing themselves letting go of a busy and stressful life and being more flexible in body and mind. Their motivations are related to spirituality and mental well-being

Buckley, Zhong & Martin (2021) with a preference for organic food and alternative healing treatments. The greater focus is on the improvement of human well-being, a healthier lifestyle in a peaceful environment in interaction with nature (da Costa Guerra et. al., 2022).

Especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, the pursue for overall mental well-being increased as it had a tremendous impact on all age groups. Common mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, social separation, poor sleep quality or distress, which overall exist due to a high workload and stress (Riepenhausen, Wackerhagen, Reppmann, Deter, Kalisch, Veer & Walter, 2022), got even worse through the pandemic (Vindegaard & Benros, 2020).

Not only due to Covid 19 but also a general high workload and performance stress among employees, the number of people between 25 and 50 suffering from mental health issues, such as depression, burn out or anxiety is steadily increasing (Fofana, Latif, Sarfraz, Bashir & Komal, 2020).

2.8. Surf tourism and well- being

As the characteristics of the surfing activity itself indicates, surf tourism is functionally related not only to sport tourism, but also adventure, health, and nature-based tourism (Hall, 1992) due to common motivations and social values. Health tourism can be addressed more specifically as medical tourism or more related to wellness, in which well-being plays a great part. Sports tourism and well-being has already been connected in literature (Olive & Wheaton, 2021).

Surfing is not only the physical execution itself but includes several other aspects benefits this sport like being in nature, being exposed to good weather conditions, being on the water, living the lifestyle and meeting new people. There are several studies thematizing intrinsic and extrinsic impacts of physical activity protecting against diseases and stress (Street & Cutt, 2007).

2.8.1. Well-being in adventure tourism

The demand for adventure tourism increases in the past decades, with desires for new activities and memorable experiences (Schänzel & Yeoman, 2015). Adventure tourism can be broadly defined as experiences in land, air, and water, which supply forms are highly differentiated (Weber, 2001). Holm, Lugosi, Croes and Torres (2017) determine the participation in adventure tourism can increase the levels of perceived well-being, due to its positive impacts on personal development, accomplishment, fulfilment, and social interactions (Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016).

The characteristics of adventure tourism changed from being mainly men-predominant, with a high level of risk, endorphin-seeking and dominated by very expressive personalities which is said to lead towards higher resilience (Schaenzel & Yeoman, 2015) to addressing more heterogenous tourists (ATTA, 2018). This trend makes adventure tourism available for a wide range of personalities, demanding personal growth, accomplishments, social interaction, and ideal experiences. Tourists encounter challenges during adventurous experiences, which then enhances their satisfaction and subjective well-being (Holm et al., 2017), same as their eudemonic well-being (Houge Mackenzie & Hodge, 2020). In dependence on the self-determination theory by Ryan and Deci (2001), adventure tourism satisfies the desire for adrenaline and endorphins (Knobloch, Robertson & Aitken, 2017), which benefits the satisfaction of psychological as like competence, autonomy, and relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Competence is addressed, as surfing depends on the adaption of new skills in a mostly unknown element, and therefore enhances long lasting eudemonic well-being (Pomfret, 2011). Even the experience of success and disappointment while surfing, contributes positively towards EWB thanks to the ultimately positive outcome (Pomfret, 2011). Therefore, also the stay in a surf camp and the learning of the new sports, same as the general participation in surf tourism activities, facilitates emotional relationships and the feeling of social belonging.

Another interesting point of view are the intrinsic and extrinsic motives of tourists participating in adventure or surf tourism. After Buckley (2012), intrinsic motives are directly related to the activity outcome, the being in nature is intrinsic as well as extrinsic,

and the participation within a group is motivated by extrinsic nature. Houge Mackenzie and Brymer (2018) relate motives and well-being. Surf tourists are looking for short-term, exciting, and favorable social experiences, which can be related to hedonic well-being. With the steady or recurring participation in surf tourism, the extrinsic motives change to intrinsic. The individual thrives to become better in the activity, immerse himself more in nature and self-actualization (Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). This stage addresses elements of eudemonic well-being. While motivational differences exist between individuals, Houge Mackenzie and Brymer (2018) define several benefits on both hedonic and eudemonic well-being through adventure and therefore surf tourism:

...positive life transformations; optimal experiences; emotional regulation; development of emotional agency in interpersonal relationships; improved quality of life; goal achievement; social connections; escape from boredom; exploring personal boundaries; overcoming limitations imposed by fear; pleasurable kinesthetic bodily sensations; a sense of merging with nature; and transcendence
(Brymer (2018: 9))

2.8.2. Well-being in nature-based tourism

A change is taking place in our society. A large part of the younger people recognizes the need to act and priorities more and more the personal development and health. The motivation of many tourists is mental well-being and the focus shifts from the standardized hotel to nature based, wellness and adventure tourism. As surfing is a huge part of international sport tourism it can be also seen as a part of nature-based tourism. Its main characteristics as being exposed to sunshine, spending time in the ocean and in general being exposed to nature goes greatly along with the intentions of nature-based tourism (Li et al., 2012).

Surfing is an activity that, until a few years ago, could only take place in coastal areas, and therefore depends on the evolution and accessibility to nature-based tourism. The

tourism form was already recognized as providing positive impact towards health and well-being (Winter, Selin, Cerveny & Bricker, 2019), as, inter alia, building and improvement of social relationships and enhancement of people's natural heritage (Wolsko, Lindberg & Reese, 2019). The process of exposure to nature and being actively involved in recreational activities as surfing can result in improvement of positive affect in the form of better attentional capacity, positive emotions, and the ability to reflect (Mayer, Frantz, Bruhlman-Senecal & Dolliver, 2009). This process allows to enhance subjective well-being through improving happiness and self-development. Nature-based activities are also known to affect the cognitive functions, through improvement of attention, concentration, and control, ultimately belonging to mastery and skill appropriation embedded as components of eudemonic well-being. Hedonic well-being within nature-based tourism is attributed by a greater happiness and contentment when being active in outdoors, even when participating in an only banal activity (Ballew & Omoto, 2018). This can result in a decreased stress level and mood swings (Hansmann, Hug & Seeland, 2007). In fact, Pretty et al. (2007) found a relationship between nature-based activities and psychological well-being through an increase of feeling of self-worth.

2.8.2.1. Blue Space

The importance of water for the physical well-being is obviously connected to the simple fact that the human body cannot survive without it. Recent studies show that tourists preferably stay close to the ocean while on vacation and have a higher willingness to pay for this ad on (White, Smith, Humphryes, Pahl, Snelling & Depledge, 2010). Thus, the psychological impact on well-being through water is only thematized in the past decade. In research this is often defined as the "blue space" (Voelker & Kisteman, 2011).

The World Health Organization (2021) reported the increase of well-being through the stay and interaction within the exposure to blue or green environments, where the focus lied mostly on green spaces and only contained the "blue space" as a sub-element. Blue refers to the proximity of natural water like the ocean (Denton & Aranda, 2020) and

green to the existence of natural green areas. The direct impact of the therapeutical use of outdoor water elements has not been systematically assessed yet. Only a few studies refer to the impact of blue spaces on well-being, which can be broadly divided into emotional benefits, recreational and direct health benefits (Völker & Kisteman, 2011). It is said to promote stress release and recovery from unpleasant events (Kolokotsa, Lilli, Lilli, & Nikolaidis, 2020).

Water activities like swimming, have positive impact on mental health. White et al. (2010) justify the increased immersion of therapeutical benefits from swimming with the complexity of the activity. Swimming includes the interaction between different bodies and movements in a multisensorial environment (e.g., colors, shapes, sounds, temperature, scents, textures), in various elements and impacts positively emotions, affect and perceived restorativeness (White et al., 2010). Adnan et. al. (2019) pointed out a reduction of all variables within the DASS (Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale) same as POMS (Profile of Mood State) due to regular swimming activity. Worth mentioning is the reduction of tension, depression, anger, fatigue, and confusion (Denton & Aranda, 2020).

The referred benefits can also be ultimately found in the participation in surfing as the sport itself takes place in the sea, mostly surrounded by nature. Ponting and O'Brian (2015) even stress out that swimming in the ocean can be identified as the first form of surfing. Surfers spend many hours in the water, improving their skills or just enjoying the environment. The fact that the surf tourist is exposed to the encounter of ocean and sky, creates an even wider blue environment as enables a higher degree of exposure to the blue space (White et al., 2010).

Lisahunter and Stoodley (2021) studied the perception of blue space from a surfer perspective, averting the usual research approaches. Whereas most of the surveys take place after the participation in surfing and therefore addresses the memory of the surfer, these authors explored the behavior and reactions during the actual activity. The authors found that especially the gazing and observation of the nature and environment surrounding the surfer increases sensory perception and self-awareness. These aspects can be related to Bell, Phoenix, Lovell & Wheeler's study (2015) on the coast as a therapeutic landscape as surfing puts a surfer life into perspective of a "bigger picture" and gives participants a feeling of connection with the whole. While Lisahunter and

Stoodley's (2021) observation of the surfers, it became apparent that surfing and the emotional development while participation is a peak experience. While the paddling out and the waiting for waves is a quieter part, the act of surfing the wave is connected to a high level of concentration and self-focus. Additionally, the moment after the wave is expressed by happiness and laughter. Surfing, therefore, addresses different emotion and connectedness (Lisahunter & Stoodley, 2021), which influence both hedonic and eudemonic well-being. Furthermore, tranquility and exhilaration were not only observed while surfing, but also got recalled after the activity; the memory of the experience triggered a second peak of emotions. Being one with nature while surfing can also be expressed by a flow experience, which impacts subjective well-being (Kim & Thapa, 2018).

2.8.2.2. Social interaction and connectedness

Following up Lisahunter and Stoodley (2021), for some of the observed surfers, the social aspect of the sport caused happiness and the feeling of belonging. In fact, in other studies, nature- and social-connectedness are set as important factors that contribute to subjective wellbeing (McNeil, Singh & Chambers, 2022). Indeed, nature is stressed to improve the interaction with other participants (Rogerson Gladwell, Gallagher, & Barton, 2016) and influence social belonging, pro social behavior, and connectedness with others (Goldy & Piff, 2020). These facts align with the assumption that being in nature can reduce social disconnection and, therefore, affects well-being (Poon, Teng, Wong, & Chen, 2016).

2.8.3. Well-being in surf tourism

The interest in using blue spaces as a therapeutic intervention is steadily increasing, especially with close focus on how water affects well-being and self-awareness. Therefore, the research in water related activities as swimming or surfing emerged and show direct impacts, although the activities are differing and the elements meant to

emphasize well-being are limited (Wheaton et al., 2017). Surf tourism originally takes place in coastal areas and the individual or group is permanently exposed to the erratic and complex element of the water. Compared to artificial waves or pools, the ocean is constantly changing. Depending on the swell, the tide, currents, accessibility, winds or crowds, the element can address various emotions and challenges when studying the tourism experience. There are now various advanced methods to observe tourist or individual feelings and actions while participating in the activity, rather than analyzing experiences just after the performance (Lisahunter & Stoodley, 2021).

Different research presents surfing as a multi-sensory and uniting experience (Anderson, 2013; Wheaton, 2013). Anderson (2013) divides within “the body accesses well-being through immersion”, the let go of control and the devotion to the watery element. While surfing, the sensory awareness of the salt water on the skin, the pressure of waves and moving water and the “flushing air” while riding a wave contribute towards a multisensory experience and enhance bodily confidence and self-awareness (Wheaton, 2013).

However, considering that surfing is a multidimensional and complex sport within the blue space environment, evidence of negative emotions and experiences exists (Britton, Kindermann, Domegan & Carlin, 2020). This is mostly explained by barriers of participation due to physical or psychological limitations. Some participants reported fear on a feeling of being unsafe, same as being at the mercy of the element. Furthermore, surfing seems to be the most researched treatment in therapeutic blue space interventions (Britton et al., 2020). Its benefits were linked to the steady need of adaption during the participation and an enhancement of social belonging and identity when participation in a group (Hignett, White, Pahl, Jenkin & Froy, 2017; Godfrey, Devine-Wright & Taylor, 2015). In addition, Matos et al. (2017) thematize the positive impact of surfing on social integration among children. Wheaton et al. (2017) complement the discussion around well-being and surfing with the importance of immersing in a different environment, ultimately allowing to forget about every-day fears and problems. Caddick et al. (2015) exemplify these benefits with former combatants suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Moreover, Wheaton et al. (2017) determined strong personal development and well-being through surfing, highlighting the potential of lifestyle sports to build confidence and capability.

The Wave Project in England concentrates on a 6-week-surfing intervention for kids between 8 and 18 and registered a significant impact on mental well-being and inclusive group behavior among the audience (Godfrey et. al., 2015). Matos et. al. (2017) not only found a positive impact through “surf therapy” for children in foster homes as exploration and improved problem-solving, social competencies, emotional regulation, and better time management, but also defined surf therapy as a highly promising tool for the treatment of young, institutionalized kids.

“Surf therapy”, based on the Waves for change curriculum, is particularly deployed in post- conflict settings. It is found to create a “safe place for peer sharing and support” (Marshall, Ferrier, Ward & Martindale, 2020) through encouraging coaches, while enabling building new positive social connections. The intervention also highlighted procedures to handle anger or fear and enhance communication, which ultimately leads to respite of stress.

In 2017, the International Surf Therapy Organization (ISTO) arose, which consists of the global leading “surf therapy” professionals and researchers. Their aim is to inform and provide access to the benefits of surf therapy and make it a global accepted on research-based program to promote well-being.

Armhein (2016) links the practice of surf sport and possible positive influences on the psychological state and overall well-being. While his subjects noted an increase in spirituality levels, the positive impact on depressive behavior remained undetected. However, since the author’s study covered a period of 2 semesters, it is, therefore, to be investigated whether staying in a surf environment for only a short period of time has a positive impact as there will be more aspects impacting the mental well-being over a longer period.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The aim of the following chapter is to present the methodological approach used to explore the role of surf tourism, considering visitors' experience in a surf camp related to hedonic and eudemonic well-being. This chapter presents the aim of the research undertaken, the methodological approach applied, the sample, and lastly describe the instruments used for the data collection and analysis.

The central questions for this research were as followed:

Q1: What are the main motivational factors for individuals staying in a surf camp?

Q2: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived eudaimonic well-being?

Q3: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived physical well-being?

Q4: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived hedonic well-being?

Q5: To which extent participating in a surf camp impact individuals' level of restoration?

Q6: What are the main environmental factors influencing well-being during a surf experience camp?

Q7: How participants evaluate their overall experience in a surf camp against their expectations?

3.1. Qualitative approach

For this study a qualitative methodological approach was chosen. Based on Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson and Kangasniemi (2016) the process of research includes the collection of data as empirical work. In general, qualitative research is initiated with the induction, which includes the data collection referring to a specific area of research or aims of research. During the process of data collection, the research structure can also be deductive, depending on the respondents' answers.

Qualitative research was considered more applicable for this exploratory research, as the perception of well-being and tourism experiences is a highly subjective topic, which not only depends on personal perception but also external influences. Both deductive (from literature review) and inductive approaches were used. This research approach allows a greater capacity of enlightening individual's experiences and feelings rather than a quantitative approach.

3.2. Interviews

Qualitative research methods be carried out with a smaller number of participants. To gain more valuable information during an interview, it should not follow a strict structure but leave space for subjective and situational answers. For this study, semi-structured interviews were chosen to add information to the research topic, as they are the most common approach in health-care or well-being related topics (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson & Kangasniemi, 2016). They enable participants to unfold personality strains more open and provide more flexibility during the interview and therefore a higher chance of valuable and in-depth information. It allows the interviewee to give more personal and specific answers compared to standardized interviews, maintaining a structure for comparison between participants (May, 1997). The purpose of using semi-structured interviews to collect data is to gain personal information from participants regarding their experiences, attitudes and perceptions related to the study area. Semi-structured interviews are effective for collecting open-ended data and gain insights about participants feelings and perceptions. The challenge of semi-structured interviews lays in the ability of the interviewer to lead the interview and choose the right questions and reactions, same as the risk of researcher bias (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

An interview guide was prepared based on the research objectives and literature review. The script has seven main sections. The first question refers to the participants demographics, followed by eight sections referring the participants experience in the surf camp as the main motivational factors, eudaimonic well-being, physical well-being,

hedonic well-being, level of restoration, environmental factors and evaluation of the overall experience.

The first part serves as filter question regarding the methodology and covers name, age, profession, and previous experience in a surf camp of everyone. If these selective answers are answered accordingly, the interview will continue.

The first question explores the main driving factors of each individual to book and finally participate in the surf experience. This may or may not include specific events related to personal life or their profession. The second question is aiming to gain information related to personal growth and eudemonic well-being, questioning about possible changes in the perspective of life. This is followed by a question referring to hedonic well-being and focuses on personal feelings during the experience. The fifth question focuses on an individual restoration and stress level, thematizing outcome of the experience. The sixth question is taking an environmental factor in consideration which may or may not impact the perception of the surf camp experience negatively or positively.

Towards the end, the interviewees are asked to sum up their whole experience to enhance opening more personal data. In some cases, the interviewer takes the pandemic into consideration. This question aims to gain information about an enhanced attention to improvement of both physical and mental well-being and the awareness level of those.

Table 3.1. Interview guide

Research questions	Thematic	Questions in the interview	References
	Participants demographics	<p><i>Have you participated in a surf camp before? (this is a filter question according to your methodology)</i></p> <p><i>How old are you? (this is a filter question according to your methodology)</i></p> <p><i>Where are you from?</i></p> <p><i>What is your profession?</i></p> <p><i>What is your marital status?</i></p>	
1. What are the main motivational factors for individuals staying in a surf camp?	Driving factors for participation in surf camp	<p><i>What was the main motivational factor for booking holidays in a surf camp? What were your goals?</i></p> <p><i>(Was there any specific personal event that initiated the desire to attend a surf holiday)?</i></p>	Bieger & Beritelli, 2018
2. To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived eudaimonic well-being ?	Perception of self-growth	<i>After this experience, do you consider that you developed yourself? (e.g., change in perspectives of life; it can be positive, negative)?</i>	Zhang & Chen, 2022; Waterman, 1993
3. To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived physical well-being ?	Body awareness	<p><i>Had the surf experience a positive influence on your physical well-being?</i></p> <p><i>Did any specific ability change/ improved during the experience?</i></p> <p><i>Was there any negative experience related to physical well-being during surfing?</i></p>	Zhang & Chen, 2022
4. To which extent participating in a surf camp impact perceived hedonic well-being ?	Perception of hedonic experience	<p><i>Did the surf experience change your mood?</i></p> <p><i>How did you feel during your stay? (this can already include positive and negative)</i></p> <p><i>What were the situations that triggered those specific feelings?</i></p>	Seligman, 2012; Kahneman, Diener & Schwarz, 1999
5. To which extent participating in a surf camp impact individuals' level of restoration ?	Perception of stress and restoration	<p><i>Did the experience in the surf camp as a whole influenced your usual average stress level? (higher or lower)</i></p> <p><i>Did the surf experience as a whole had an influence on level of restoration, such as the sense of:</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a) <i>Being away from your daily routine?</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">b) <i>Fascination?</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">c) <i>Connection to nature/ others?</i></p>	Ryff, 2018
6. What are the main environmental factors influencing well-being during a surf experience camp?	External stimuli influencing the level of stress and restoration	<p><i>Were there specific external elements that helped you to feel less stressed and more restored? (e.g. sea, landscape, silence...) - positive</i></p> <p><i>Were there specific external elements that helped you to feel more stressed and less restored? - negative</i></p>	Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Keyes, 2002; Qiu et al., 2021
7. How participants evaluate their overall experience in a surf camp ?	Overall experience	<p><i>Were all your expectations addressed?</i></p> <p><i>How would you sum up the surf experience?</i></p>	Weed & Bull, 2008

Source: own elaboration

3.3. Sampling and selection

For this study, a purposive sampling approach was selected. The research issue is underlying specific experiences and therefore needs a similar sample of the population regarding specific characteristics (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2015).

As the whole data collection process in form of interviews is carried out in one surf camp in the Algarve, the basic inclusion criteria were the active participation in the surf camp, surf lessons and related activities for at least one week. Participants of the research were questioned about any previous experience in surfing. Experienced surfers perceive various factors related to surfing differently compared to beginners, as they are more familiar with conditions related to this sport. To reveal the impact of surf tourism on well-being, it was important to take this factor into consideration. Furthermore, for this study the researcher concentrated on participants aged between 28 and 45. This age cohort allows to have a coherent group, and therefore, to enable better comparison between the subjects. Also, all participants were selected under the focus of being full-time employed and participating in a surf camp for the first time without any previous experience. Gender was another criterion that was considered when composing the sample. An attempt was made to constitute a sample equally represented by men and women.

Participants were sought directly through the interviewer, who was observing guests within one surf camp in the Algarve. The number of interviewees depended on the cumulated outcome and was indicated by the saturation criterion, meaning that interviews had to be continued until there is no additional information (Francis, Johnston, Robertson, Glidewell, Entwistle, Eccles & Grimshaw, 2010).

3.4. Data Collection

The interviews were conducted over a period of 7 weeks starting on the 03. July 2023 and ended 21. August 2023. Before the interviews were conducted with each interviewee, their informed consent was requested. Each interview was recorded, using an iPhone 12 as recording unit.

The (i) questions and answers were worded clearly, the (ii) wording was open ended to allow the participants to answer using their own words and explanations to gain as much information as possible, and the (iii) questions were worded neutral, to reduce the chance of interviewer bias and influence the participants answers in any kind of way (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016).

Prior to the proper examination of the interviews, one trial interview was conducted. This test aimed to see if the wording of questions initiates the right outcome and if they are well understood by interviewees, also to see if there is a proper flow during the interviews and to give the researcher some understanding of how to conduct the interview itself (Bryman & Cramer, 2012).

3.5. Analysis and data interpretation

All data from participants was treated confidentially, therefore all names of participants throughout the study stay anonymous. Each interview was given a specific code which consists of (I) for interview, the number of each sequence between one and 25 and the gender as to (M) for masculine or (F) for feminine.

After each interview was conducted, it was transcribed, followed by the analysis and interpretation of data. There are various types of content analysis, for this study categorical analysis or thematical analysis (Bryman & Cramer, 2012) was chosen. The

thematic analysis detects crucial parts and enables analysis of frequencies that might contribute important data towards the research question.

In the first phase, certain thematic were defined deductively referring to the theoretical models and literature review. This categorization suggests the classing and reduction of data after its recognition, aiming to provide better information towards the research objectives (Mayer, 2015). To simplify the process of analysis, for each thematic categories and subcategories were deductively created. The categorisation, starting from thematic to subcategory, gives 7 significant thematic, 10 categories and 17 subcategories from the corpus of analysis. During the data analysis and categorization some subcategories emerged inductively from the data.

The content of the interviews was also indexed into the respective categories and subcategories. The analysis categories were organized in an Excel sheet, the respective interview texts were indexed, and the respective interview codes were indicated. This process allows to break down the data, get a total overview of quotas for each category and identify their components. It makes data more manageable and simplifies the process of analysis, compared to listening and listing the records (Bryman & Cramer, 2012). The construction of the category matrix was being validated by the guidance team.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This following chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the data collected within the interviews.

It begins with the characterization of the respondents from the interview, followed by a summary consisting of each thematic presented above, raised by the literature review. The discussed thematic will be divided into each category and subcategory and then analysed separately. Lastly, the answers to each question will be carried out under the aegis of literature findings and discussed.

4.1. Sample Characterization

Table 2 presents each respondent's profile, including the sequence of conducted interview, gender, age, profession, country of origin and the individual interviewee code used for the analysis. As already mentioned, all participants were selected under the focus of being full- time employed and participating in a surf camp for the first time without any previous experience.

Table 4.1. Profile of respondents

Interview sequence	Gender	Age	Profession	Country of origin	Interviewee Code
1	Feminine	30	Photographer	Spain	I1F
2	Masculine	37	Doctor	Spain	I2M
3	Masculine	33	Professor	Venezuela	I3M
4	Feminine	34	Fashion Manager	Phillipines	I4F
5	Feminine	32	Nurse Intensive Care	Switzerland	I5F
6	Masculine	45	Hospitality Manager	France	I6M
7	Feminine	30	Lawyer	Germany	I7F
8	Masculine	31	Informatics	Spain	I8M
9	Masculine	34	Yoga Teacher	South Africa	I9M
10	Feminine	26	Product Manager Tech	Germany	I10F
11	Masculine	32	Software Engineer	Spain	I11M
12	Masculine	39	Radiologist	Germany	I12M
13	Masculine	42	Scrum Master	Portugal	I13M
14	Masculine	34	Construction Worker	Belgium	I14M
15	Feminine	30	DJ	Hungary	I15F
16	Masculine	28	Operations Manager	Italy	I16M
17	Masculine	36	Tech Life Coaching	Germany	I17M
18	Feminine	31	Doctor	Germany	I18F
19	Feminine	27	Marketing Manager	Germany	I19F
20	Feminine	29	Graphic Designer	Spain	I20F
21	Feminine	45	Financial Anaylist	Germany	I21F
22	Feminine	32	Journalist	Netherlands	I22F
23	Feminine	25	Content Creator	Poland	I23F
24	Masculine	32	Employee law firm	Germany	I24M
25	Feminine	34	Architect	Germany	I25F

Source: own elaboration

4.2. Thematic analysis

The following Table 3 shows the investigated thematic, category and subcategory used for the analysis of the interviews. For the final analysis and to add content to the scheme, each sequence from the interviews, which contributed to the created subcategories, was added manually to the table. To secure an accurate analysis, each cited sequence was followed by individual interviewee code.

Table 4.2. Thematics, categories and subcategories

Thematic	Category	Subcategory
Factors for Participation	Challenging oneself	Setting personal goals
		Embracing new experiences
		Overcoming fears and insecurities
	Meeting new people	Establish new connections
	Identity	Seeking new experiences
		Discovering new passions
	Distance to normal life	Disconnect from usual environment
		Disconnect from daily routine
Perception of self- growth (eudaimonia)	Mindfulness and active meditation	Introspection
		Personal growth and self-reflection
	Change of life perspective	Awareness of deficits
		Awareness of desires
	Change in character	Open minded
		Sociable
Body awareness	Physical fitness improvement	New gained skill
		General fitness level
	Enhancing mind and body connection	Flow
		Interoception
		Proudness
		Challenge
Perception of stress and restoration	Decrease of stress	Being in nature
		Social connections
		Physical activities
	Increase of stress	Judgement and Expectations
		Natural environment
		Surf camp environment
Perception of hedonic experience	Change of mood	Happiness
		Freedom
		Excitement
		Satisfaction
		Social environment
External stimuli influencing stress and restoration	Decrease of stress	Ocean
		Natural Environment
		Weather
Evaluation of overall experience and perspective of happiness (including perception of change after Covid- 19)	Change in mindset	Enhancement of well- being
		Enhancement of social connections

Source: own elaboration

4.2.1. Factors of participation

Regarding the thematic “Factors of participation”, it seems that the interviewees were motivated to participate in the surf camp due to various factors. Some were inspired to challenge themselves and set personal goals, while others wanted to meet new people and establish connections. Additionally, there were those who sought new experiences and hobbies, and some wanted to distance themselves from their regular lives and environment.

4.2.1.1. Challenging oneself

In the study the statements of participants referring to this category were divided into “setting personal goals”, “embracing new experiences” and “overcoming fears and insecurities”. Several interviewees stated that they had a specific reason and goal why to join the surf camp. One person mentioned “So my main goal was to get my head off. To free my mind” (I18F). Another person can be cited as “My goal is to be fit. More fit and do more cardio” (I15F). These two statements show that the goals joining a surf camp can vary and are not only physical but also mental. “I wanted to like, uh, get into surfing and maybe get good or something” (I18F). This also mirrors the desire to develop and challenge oneself within gaining new skills. For participants, surfing is not only a sport; it is a challenge. The challenge is not only physical, riding the waves, but also mental, overcoming fears and embracing the unknown. The participant’s statement, "I always wanted to try to go surfing or to learn how to surf" (I19F) exemplifies this yearning to tackle something new.

The embracement of new experiences is another aspect which bears challenges for everyone. The citation “I never tried it before, and I wanted to try surfing for the first time” (I16M) points out that participants decide to join this experience without any set expectations and are ready to face challenges. “They invited me, and because it's a sport and I love doing sports, I was very inspired to do it” (I3M) which shows another

statement of one participant. This citation also supports the main category as it shows that participants are eager to try new experiences.

Although there are several participants joining the experience without any expectations, others were slightly concerned about their abilities and what to expect from it. One participant mentioned "I was a bit scared at first. Scared. But only in the first few minutes... But then, um, I try to just like push these thoughts away and to enjoy, um, the, the moment or the, the time in the water. And yeah, it actually, surprisingly, it worked pretty good" (I19F). This shows that the experience enables participants to overcome their fears and insecurities. Participants who were anxious at the beginning, change their mindset due to the challenge and even enjoy it at the end.

4.2.1.2. Meeting new people

Beyond the waves, the surf camp offers a cultural milieu that enhances the feeling of belonging to a group and social bonding. The surf camp is not just about individuals, it is about being part of a community, meeting new people and establish new connections. One participant mentioned "And maybe another goal was to meet some really cool, interesting, like-minded people" (I9M), which shows that one of the main factors of participation is the desire to become part of a community. "But also traveling as a single person, also meeting up with people, like a community of people that actually share same interests with me" (I12M), supports this observation. Not only is the surf camp a place to meet new people, but also one of mutual support. This environment is particularly suitable for beginners, who share both the thrill of a new experience and the anxiety that accompanies it. The reflection, "...how people support each other, especially the beginner surfers... everyone is maybe a little bit scared and then people try to push, uh, each other," (I19F) is representative of this shared experience. Here, the surf camp transcends its role as a sporting venue and evolves into a social platform, where shared vulnerabilities and enjoyment become the basis of lasting connections. Cohen (1974) in his typology of tourists highlighted the 'social contact' sought by individuals when they travel, seeking authentic interactions and deeper connections.

4.2.1.3. Identity

The surf camp is not only a momentary experience. For many who join, it can be the beginning of a lifelong experience, seeking the same or even more sensations of the sport. The passionate citation, "Yeah, definitely. I'm going to become a surfer" (I1F), is not entirely just about adopting a new hobby. It is about embracing a new identity and a new passion. Schaezel and Yeoman (2015) identified knowledge seeking and exploration as primary motivations for travel, emphasizing the intrinsic human desire to learn and grow. This transformational potential of the experience in a surf camp is profound. The activity and all external factors impacting the experience, have the potential to shape one's identity. The camp offers not just skills but an adapted sense of the self. Another participant mentioned "I feel like I wasn't helping myself and surfing would be such a great way to get out of my way" (I17M), which shows that the experience in the surf camp enables people to escape their old identity and embrace a change due to experiencing new things. The discovery of new passions also contributes towards a changed identity. The citations "I was kind of depressed, so I was really looking forward just to see new faces and also to try something new that might be a new thing for me" (I25F) same as "I was attracted by what would be the feeling of trying myself" (I16M) are supporting this observation.

4.2.1.4. Distance from normal life

Among the dissonance of daily life, the surf camp emerges as a safe place of comfort and has the potential to enable disconnection from the usual environment and daily routines. One participant mentioned "I just really had to go out. I felt like I had to leave my home, I had to leave my friends, I had to leave my job just to experience something very new and just to really clear my head" (I25F). This meaning not just the physical space, away from familiar locales, but profoundly emotional and mental. Zhang and Chen (2022) highlighted the evolutionary nature of travel motivations, with self-actualization and fulfilment being impactable needs. The surf camp is a pursuit for clarity, an option to

escape from the normal life, and a journey towards self-renewal. The camp offers a place to recalibrate one's emotional and mental happiness. The sentiment "I wanted to escape the stress of work and daily life" (I20F) also shows that the distance to the usual environment enables participants to take distance from their stress. "I feel like I hear a lot of information about surfing being an active meditation, so I need it as a good distraction or as a good hobby from my very demanding and stressful career" (I4F) highlights the potential of surfing to help create distance to the usual environment. Also escaping daily routines was mentioned as a factor for participation in the surf camp and one participant mentioned "something new, something a bit more physical with my body and, um, get some fresh air outside of the office" (I17M).

The "Factors for Participation" in the surf camp are complex and layered. They cover aspects of personal ambition, social influences, shared vulnerabilities, transformative experiences, and emotional rejuvenation. Each citation and sentiment from the participants offer insights into the human psyche, revealing not just motivations for attending the surf camp but deeper insights into the human desire for growth, connection, and renewal. The diverse motivations of individuals to take part in surf camps show a wide spectrum from intrinsic desires to external driving factors. At the heart of human being is the urge to challenge oneself. The surf camp, with its dynamic and adventurous being, serves as a channel for this drive.

Furthermore, surf camps evolve as a platform not just for sportive attempts but also for cultivating social connections. The essence of human well-being often interlaces with the quality of social relationships. The surf camp environment, contributing towards social belonging and mutual motivation, offers a place for such connections.

For some, the camp represents opportunity of exploration, for new experiences and hobbies. The embrace of a recreational experience can embrace personal transformation.

Lastly, the camp offers a place of escape from daily life. This can be seen as a mental transformation towards rejuvenation. Drawing parallels from literature, the motivations to holiday often show the dynamics observed in the surf camp. According to Pomfret and Bramwell (2016) in their study, holidays serve as platforms for self-actualization, relationship enhancement, and escape from routine. Similarly, Holm et. al. (2017)

identified socio-psychological motives like relaxation, self-exploration, and social interaction as significant drivers for holidaying.

4.2.2. Perception of self- growth (eudaimonia)

Eudaimonia, a term emanating from ancient Greek philosophy, translates to 'flourishing' or 'thriving'. It captures the essence of living in accordance with one's true self, a life imbued with meaning, purpose, and deep satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

4.2.2.1. Mindfulness and active meditation

The surf camp emerges as a sanctuary for mindfulness. Most participants mentioning the confront the wideness of the ocean and the rhythm of its waves, nurture a profound state of presence. The ocean, with its rhythmic pattern, serves as a natural reserve for introspection and mindfulness. One participant mentioned, "...when I was outside in the water, sometimes I was also trying to concentrate myself, trying to think about nothing..." (I19F). This active engagement with the present moment, often referred to as 'flow' is also a highly discussed topic in literature (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993). When individuals are to engaged in the activity like surfing, they lose sense of time and problems, which allows them to reach a state on oneness with their environment. The comment "I really realized that I'm good on my own. I don't need to depend on other people" (I25F), underlines the power of surfing to enhance introspection and enables more self-awareness. Another participant shared "And now also physically, it changed a lot that I think more positive" (I10F), which supports the previous statement.

Another participant's comment, "I think I'm trying to control as much things as possible... and when I'm surfing, I just let it go," (I25F) exemplifies the freeing quality of surfing. This automatic connection to the present bears therapeutic implications. The act of letting

go of control and opening for uncertain situations enhances resilience and adaptability, qualities crucial for mental well-being (Seligman, 2012).

Being exposed to the depth and the power of the ocean is aligning with the symbolic journey of participants while they confront fears, limitations and potential and therefore enables personal growth and self-reflection. As one participant captured, "I think it also impacts your physical and mental health because you're pushing your limits... and you also have to deal with your fears" (I23F). These words echo the findings of psychologists like Waterman (1993) and Zhang and Chen (2022), who believed that confronting and understanding one's fears is pivotal for genuine self-growth.

The reflection, "When you're surfing, you're just with yourself... and then you start to think about things which maybe you don't want to think about" (I16M), empowers the transformative power of solitude. In these moments of confrontation individuals often confront unresolved emotions, traumas, and future aspirations, while surfing leads them to a path of self-discovery (Zhang & Chen, 2022).

Another revealing statement was, "So it's really like a place where you jump in and then there you are. There by yourself with nature. So yes. Helps you to disconnect" (I16M). This comment proves that surfing can create clarity amongst an activity, which aligns to Maslow's (1962) peak experiences mentioning moments of understanding and self-realisation.

The sentiment, " I became more aware of my movements and how my body responded to the waves" (I22F) embodies the journey from doubt to confidence and therefore makes a big part of self- growth (Zhang & Chen, 2022).

The surf camp, with its immersive experience, facilitates a deep level of self- absorption. One participant shared, "It's a great feeling when you catch your first wave... you feel like you've accomplished something big, not just in surfing but in life." This is not only applicable mastering a sport but can be seen as a metaphor of overcoming challenges in life and succeeding, resonating with Waterman's (1993) concept of 'personal expressiveness'.

Another participant mused, "Every time I'm on the board, I feel free, I feel alive... It's like I found a missing piece of me." Such expressions underscore the profound eudaimonic experience the surf camp offers, where participants not only learn and experience a new sport but have the option to reconnect with themselves and reaching a new level of wholeness and contentment.

The surf camp and experience viewed out of an eudaimonic perspective, transcends its physical limitation. It is high layered and creates a space for introspection, transformation of oneself and the chance to reconnect. The waves in the ocean can even be seen as a metaphor for the journey of facing fears and insecurities of participants. It is therefore evident that a surf camp has the potential to create a microcosmos for self- exploration and well- being.

4.2.2.2. Change of life perspective

Regarding a change of life perspective during and after the experience, 5 participants shared their observations, mentioning for example "And now I came back to the point that, of course I need to get some rest, some time for myself" (I18F). Another interviewee said "I guess it just put me in my place a little bit and gave me a stronger respect for Mother Nature" (I9M) or "And it's making me think that I should change some aspects in my life and I should do this more often" (I8M). All these sentiments show that the surf camp experience gave impulse for a change in the future day- to- day life. These detected deficits are not only referring to a lack of fitness but more to a change in behaviour.

The experience made several participants therefore attentive to what they would want to change in their future. One person embraced "I like how important it's to enjoy more. Cause we never know when it's going to finish" (I8M). This shows that the experience of surfing is eye- opening and leads the focus more towards mental well- being, happiness and joy. The feeling the participants described during the surf experience can also be symbolically transferred to other situations in life. One participant quoted "It's like you get a chance that you should not be getting that you worked so hard for" (I14M). This

sentiment shows, that life offers chances for improvements or changes, which can be accepted by persons. Another female interviewee mentioned very adequate “in a split of a second. You'll find yourself in a situation where you have never imagined yourself, with the feelings that you never had before. And it lasts like very, very briefly. And you appreciate it even more because you realize afterwards how unique and how rare that is” (I15F), which strengthens the previously mentioned observation of transfer to daily situations in life.

4.2.2.3. Change in character

During the interviews 4 participants also mentioned, that the surf camp experience had an influence on their possible character strains. One person mentioned “kind of seeing everything from a much bigger perspective of the connection that I felt through being in the ocean and in nature” (I17M), which underlines the potential of this environment to give participants a broader understanding and realization of their surroundings. This observation though does not only impact the level of broadening an open mind of participants. Another interviewee quoted “I feel a little bit empowered and very strong. Not only physically but even more mentally” (I5F), which not only shows a physical change, but also more important a mental change in mind set.

Also, the social environment of the surf camp had impact on the participants mind set. One person mentioned “And, also of course, the surrounding of being in a surf camp with surfers. These people around you that changes a lot” (I18F). The group of people participants shared their experience with, has a profound impact on their well- being and total experience. Generally, the group of people who enjoy surfing and outdoor sport, are open- minded and welcoming. This observation got supported through another quote “The surf camp community was welcoming, and I met some interesting people from different walks of life” (I21F) and “Connecting with the other guests at the surf camp was one of the highlights of my experience. It showed me that I can adapt to different personalities and people from diverse backgrounds” (I22F).

4.2.3. Body awareness

Exploring or gaining body awareness, is a fundamental aspect of existence. It shapes physical and emotional experiences and well-being. Surfing provides an ideal platform to enhance this awareness. Surfing is not only emotionally demanding, but also triggers physical fitness improvements and enhancing the mind-body-connection.

4.2.3.1. Physical Fitness Improvement

10 of 25 participants mentioned that their general fitness level increased, through being active every day. The sentiment “I feel my whole body got a lot more fit. My shoulders feel more tight and firmed” (I25F), supports this observation. Some of the interviewees also reported about newly gained skills or a general fitness level of the body which improved. A participant mentioned, "I think it's more my upper body stamina. I think it's getting better" (I15F). Another participant shared “I was using muscles that I normally don't use, so, yeah, that was a good challenge for me to get in that beginner mindset, like learning something new again and yeah, have a lot of fun” (I3M). Surfing is physically demanding, especially the repetitive paddling motions, mainly engage the upper body, honing muscular endurance. Therefore, the development of stamina is not just about muscular strength. It is also tied to endurance, resilience, and determination, both physically and mentally (Waterman, 1993).

4.2.3.2. Enhancing mind-body connection

The affirmation, "I feel like the beginner courses, or the beginner levels are very much about understanding how your body works" (I4F), highlights the importance of body awareness in surfing. This thoughtful exploration is like proprioceptive training, where

individuals adapt to their body's position in the environment, refining their movements and reactions.

Pointing out the main role of balance in surfing as a necessary skill, a participant shared, "I would say that surfing really focuses on balance and core strength" (I24M). Balance is a complex interaction of muscular coordination, kinesthesia, and focus. This alignment of mind and body highlights the principles of body cognition, meaning that our cognition is embedded in interactions between the body and the environment (Zhang & Chen, 2022).

As mentioned before surfing can transfer oneself into a state of flow. Therefore, it has the potential, referring to a certain skill level, to become a meditative experience. Participants can recognise deeper body sensations and enables a deeper connection with themselves. As one participant noted, "Every time I go into the water, I discover something new about my body, about its limits and potentials" (I3M). This intrinsic discovery of new bodily sensations will enhance the eudemonic and hedonic well-being of interviewees, as they realise their potential not only to improve the fitness level but also transfer benefits into mental well-being (Seligman, 2012). Also the statement "it definitely met the expectation, in terms of the mind state, that surfing puts you to great mind set, more calm and more grounded" (I16M), aligns with this other sentiment.

Beyond the sport, surfing emerges as a way of therapy. The time being in the water with the waves, the adaption of breath and movements and the proximity to nature foster a feeling of flow. Individuals detach from their usual state of mind and lose themselves in surfing and being outside, experiencing joy and contentment (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993). This therapeutic dimension is captured in the citation, "When I surf, all my worries melt away. I feel alive, connected, and very aware of my body" (I6M).

Another reflection, "Surfing forces you to be in the moment, to listen to your body, to respect its signals" (I4F), underlines the importance of interoception as the sense of the physiological condition of the body. Interoception plays a crucial role in emotional regulation, self-awareness, and overall well-being (Craig, 2003). This observation is also supported by another sentiment mentioned "it definitely met the expectation, in terms of

the mind state, that surfing puts you to great mind set, more calm and more grounded” (I16M).

The surf camp, from a sight of body awareness, emerges as a transformative space. Participants, by engaging with the ocean, embark on a profound journey of self-discovery, navigating the changes and adaptations of their physical and emotional abilities. Challenges and joy that surfing brings, offers an individual insight into the human existence. One participant mentioned “I’m actually really proud of myself that I managed to make so many great connections and also to manage the surf because it was not so easy in the beginning” (I25F), supports this statement. The surf experience seems to be challenging at first, as it has many things to adapt to as a participant greatly expressed, saying “It required complete focus and awareness of my body, the board, and the rhythm of the ocean” (I22F). But then once the participant emerges fully in it, it enables a state of proudness.

4.2.4. Perception of stress and restoration

In today's fast-paced world, the need for stress relief and restoration is crucial. The therapeutic effects of nature, particularly aquatic environments, serve as a possible way of comfort and restoration (Qiu, Jin & Scott, 2021). The surf camp experience, as narrated by the participants, offers a fascinating exploration into this reciprocation of stress, restoration, and being in nature. Around 16 participants shared, that their overall stress level through their stay has decreased, through multiple factors which will be discussed. Only 3 interviewees mentioned as slight increase of stress during their surf experience, mostly interpretable through the initial fear of the unknown.

4.2.4.1. Decrease of stress

Surfing, as an activity, combines the impact of nature with the visceral experience of physical activities. Beyond the adrenaline and physical exhaustion, it provides also therapeutic benefits that intertwine with the psychological and emotional states of the participants.

Surfing and the surf camp experience serve as a conduit for releasing stress. A participant's saying, "The exhaustion after a long surf session feels rewarding... like I've cleansed my worries" (I17M), underscores the release achieved through physical activity. Such sentiments resonate with research suggesting that intense physical activities, especially in natural settings, trigger the release of endorphins and act as mood elevators (Ryff, 2018). This endorphin release, combined with the rhythmic engagement with the waves, provides a potent antidote to the stresses of daily life.

The act of surfing, with its upcoming challenges and rewards, offers profound moments of restoration. "just being in the water surrounded by blue space, I had a very great sense of a calming element to my mental state" (I9M), shared a participant. This constant interplay of challenge and reward enables a sense of accomplishment, serving as a counterpoint to routine and stress. The experience parallels the concept of "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993) — where individuals feel both engaged and competent.

Surfing provides an option for escape — not just from physical boundaries but also from emotional and mental challenges. "Riding a wave feels like flying... like I'm escaping from everything that holds me back on land," a participant commented. This sensation of freedom and transcendence is symbolic of the transformative power of physical activities in nature. The act of surfing allows individuals to momentarily escape their daily life, offering a type of liberation and possibility (Ryff, 2018).

The speeches indicate that the physical activity of surfing offers a multi-dimensional therapeutic experience. Participants, as they ride the waves, align their inner perception of stress and emotions.

The ocean offers a multi-sensory experience that has profound effects on the mental state of tourists and participants of the study. A participant shared, "...the wind and the sun on my skin. Um, when I hear the waves... it's calming" (I19M). This tactile and auditory immersion in the elements of nature provides an experience that engages multiple senses. It is embedding individuals in the present moment. Such interactions with nature have been linked to reduced mental fatigue and enhanced cognitive clarity, which aligns with the findings of Csikszentmihalyi and Rathunde (1993).

The vastness of the ocean commands attention. One participant noted, "Just being in the ocean requires so much attention; you forget everything else" (I17M). This heightened focus and immersion in the experience aligns with the principles of mindfulness, where individuals are anchored in the present moment, free from the distractions of past or future (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993). The ocean serves as a natural facilitator of this mindfulness.

The act of "Being in Nature," within the embrace of the ocean, offers a multi-dimensional therapeutic experience. Participants, as they immerse themselves in the sensory experience of the coastal environment, navigate their emotion, stress, and introspection, finding moments of clarity and rejuvenation.

The social connections had a calming effect on participants. One individual shared "the vibe and the people really helping me to forget the stress at home" (I10F), which presents again the surf camp experience as a place for relaxation and emerging distance to the usual environment. The statement "the surfer community is big and I think people who are surfing are super open minded and super friendly" (I23F) shows, that the whole community around surfing is contributing towards a decrease stress level.

4.2.4.2. Increase of stress

As mentioned already only 3 participants reported an increase of stress during their stay. They were mostly intimidated by other people joining their experience, as shown in the

statement “And also I had a bit of pressure because it was not only me, because I was with all the other people from the surf camp. So I felt a bit observed and I felt a bit pressured to perform” (I24M). If there was the initial fear of judgement, this feeling changed during the experience as cleared up by one statement “I was maybe more worried that I would not fit in initially, but then it worked out very well” (I13M).

Another point which was increasing stress initially were expectations. One participant shared “I was only a bit nervous, to be really honest, that I would not succeed and that I would not like it” (I25F), which changed during the first days. Also supported by another participants statement, saying “I was actually really scared, really worried, because I'm not really an outdoor sports person” (I7F).

During the surf experience 3 participants were slightly intimidated by the experience which led to an brief increase of stress. One interviewee said “So getting swept by the current has just brought a little bit of intimidation because I'm not a good paddler yet” (I4F), another one mentioned “I was worried also of being held underwater and the turbulence of the waves or even maybe hitting the ground. And just not knowing can be very scary” (I9M). These initial fears ebbed out though after the first two days of the surf experience. They can be explained with attempting a new hobby without mastering the necessary skills.

Only one very critical participants reported being in the surf camp with strangers as an unpleasant and stressful experience, mentioning “And in the first two days, it was really hard for me to connect with these people because we all have a very different background. So it took some time to get to know each other. And in the first days, I felt like everybody was watching me and judging me” (I24M).

4.2.5. Perception of hedonic experience

4.2.5.1. Change in mindset

Regarding the change of mood, it is noticed that the surf camp and the activity of surfing is providing the possibility to receive happiness. It provides a place where the confluence of nature, activity, and community brings up genuine moments of joy and happiness. Multiple participants shared comments regarding the emergence of happiness. One participant shared “And I think actually even you are struggling for 2 hours in the water, at the end you are happy” (I23F), which shows that even after physical exhaustion and challenges the strong feeling of happiness occurs. Another participant mentioned “So I think surfing is also the sport that I can say after these seven days I'm in a much better mood and it was really good for my mental health” (I24M). It shows that surfing and outdoor activity has a positive impact on the mood of participants and strong impacts on mental well-being (Seligman, 2012).

The natural setting of the surf camp stands out as a profound source of happiness. A participant captured this sentiment, saying, "Every morning, waking up to the sound of the waves, I felt a happiness that was pure" (I5F). This daily interaction with the ocean, the tactile sensation of the beaches, and the visual treat of nature and sun seem to bring a form of happiness.

Surfing, with its challenges, offers participants multiple moments of exhilaration and happiness. "And then you should get to share a laugh in the lineup if you, um, stumble and fall," (I15F) a participant shared. This joy despite overcoming challenges and achieving personal goals in surfing reflects that moments of achievement are sources of happiness (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

The communal aspect of the surf camp also seems to bring happiness. As a participant observed, " Surfing together and sharing our stories created a sense of camaraderie and

made me really happy and satisfied" (I22F). This aligns with findings of Kahneman, Diener & Schwarz (1999).

The surf camp emerges as a space of liberation, offering participants moments of joy, autonomy, and self-expression. With its natural setting and diverse experiences, it stands out as a place of freedom. The horizons inspire limitless possibilities, the act of surfing the waves, or the community factor. The camp offers participants a multifaceted experience of freedom.

The act of surfing provides a distinct feeling of liberation. "Once I got the hang of it, I felt this sense of freedom and oneness with the ocean" (I22F) a participant shared. This sentiment captures the essence of surfing as an activity of pure expression, where each wave offers a new canvas of possibilities. This aligns with the idea that engaging in activities that offer autonomy and self-expression can foster feelings of freedom and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The surf camp environment, detached from the routines and pressures of daily life, provides participants with a refreshing escape. "I felt so free, I felt so powerful, and I was just like in a very I felt like I'm a different world. I didn't even realize what's happening around me" (I25F) one participant observed. Such reflections underscore the value of taking breaks from structured environments, resonating with studies that highlight the rejuvenating effects of temporary escapes from daily constraints (Ryff, 2018).

The unpredictable nature of the ocean and the act of surfing itself seem to be central to the excitement experienced by participants. As one interviewee expressed, " But my nervousity was not totally negative, maybe it was also partly excitement" (I10F). This statement encapsulates the dynamic nature of the surfing experience, where each day offers new possibilities and challenges. Another comment of a participants aligns with this, saying "And then as a normal little human being able to manage this external power was just really fascinating me" (I25F).

The process of learning and mastering surfing techniques adds to the excitement. Another participant shared, " I was very much excited about it" (I13M), which refers to a feeling of excitement even before he participated in the experience. Another comment "So at

the same time you're super proud of yourself, but at the same time you are shocked. So it's like a lot of feelings in your head at the same time" (I23F). This sentiment highlights the mixture of anticipation and achievement. The excitement isn't just in the act of surfing but in the moments leading up to it and the personal accomplishments felt after successfully riding a wave.

The comments made by the participants reflect a high level of satisfaction regarding their experience in the surf camp. One person mentions that the experience was "definitely like a satisfying experience" (I13M). This indicates that the individual found the experience to be extremely rewarding and beyond their expectations. 2 other participants shared "I'm proud of myself" (I8M; I3M), which align with the previous observation and shows that the persons are proud of their achievements and efforts, satisfied with what they managed during their experience and definitely also contributes towards happiness and well- being.

Beyond individual experiences, the communal atmosphere of the surf camp plays a pivotal role in amplifying excitement. One interviewee observed, "The community is just amazing, everybody is in a good mood, everybody is motivating each other, and it feel like I have met friends for life" (I23F). This shared excitement, derived from recounting the day's adventures, adds a social dimension to the thrill of the camp. Another participant shared "it seems like a pretty cool concept if you're looking for type of a community, for example, and for people that share same interests with you" (I7M). As multiple participants shared similar feelings regarding the social environment, it emphasizes the social potential of a surf camp experience which ultimately leads to a higher level of satisfaction and well- being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This can also have longer lasting impacts on tourists, which another citation of a participants shows, saying "Very just knowing different people from all walks of life coming towards the same purpose of just enjoying the water, enjoying this activity under the sun, just made life less serious" (I3M). These finding also align with Winter et. al. (2019) and Li et al. (2012).

4.2.6. External stimuli

Several interviewees mentioned numerous external stimuli influencing their experience within their stay, affecting the stress level. Most of the comments can be related to the ocean and the surrounding natural environment and weather.

A sense of reliance on the ocean's whims was evident in the comments. As one interviewee mentioned, "It's like you're dependent on the water; the ocean decides for you when to give you waves or not" (I16M). This sentiment echoes findings from Mayer et. al. (2009) who noted the therapeutic unpredictability of nature, suggesting that the ocean's unpredictability can lead to a heightened sense of mindfulness and presence.

Many interviewees felt a profound connection with nature while immersed in the ocean. One participant described the experience as, "... it seems like you are actually taking advantage of this natural element. And I think it's very beautiful" (I13M). Another remarked on the purity of the experience, saying, "Obviously, being in the water, being in the ocean is a calming experience, and you don't have phones, watches, or anything that connects you to the rest of the world. So it's just you and nature" (I16M). These sentiments are in line with findings of Mayer et. al. (2009), showing that being exposed to the ocean can lead to positive emotions and the ability to reflect. Furthermore, aligns with findings from Ballew & Omoto (2019), that participating in activities related to the ocean can enhance hedonic well-being and happiness.

The ocean was frequently associated with feelings of calmness, tranquility, and joy. One interviewee reflected on the transformative nature of spending time in the water, saying, "But definitely getting to spend hours in the water was definitely eye-opening" (I14M). Another expressed the deep emotional connection with the water: "That is more, that's where the joy is, where the kindred feeling comes from" (I15F). This resonates with findings from Thompson et al. (2017) who found that water-based activities, especially in natural settings, can lead to significant reductions in stress and increased feelings of well-being.

The ocean, with its unpredictability, offers a transformative experience for the interviewees. Their words, supported by literature, underscore a deep connection with nature, an appreciation for the calming effect of the water, and the profound joy coming from their experience in the ocean. The absence of modern distractions and the connection with nature lead to reflections on the power and therapeutic qualities of the natural world.

The natural environment, especially during the surfing experience, offers participants a deep sense of connection, relaxation, and wonder. The comments, when viewed considering literature, emphasize the therapeutic qualities of nature, the importance of sensory experiences, and the profound feelings of awe that vast natural landscapes can evoke.

Many interviewees expressed the therapeutic qualities of being in nature. As one participant shared, "So for me, even just being in nature, is very mind relaxing and helps me a lot to forget about things" (I14M). This aligns with the concept of (Kim & Thapa, 2018), where exposure to natural environment, which emphasizes healing effects and enhances subjective well-being.

The sensory experience of nature, such as feeling the wind and sun, played a significant role in the participants' experiences. One interviewee reflected on the meditative qualities of nature, saying, "...the other way around when I felt kind of the wind and the sun on my skin. Um, when I saw the ocean and all these things, they were like kind of meditating for me..." (I19F). This sensory connection to nature has been discussed by Li et al. (2012), highlighting how disconnection from nature can lead to enhancement of well-being.

Weather, especially sunlight, played a crucial role in the participants' experiences at the surf camp. The comments, supported by literature, highlight the uplifting and energizing effects of good weather on mood and well-being. The consistent exposure to sunlight, coupled with the act of surfing, seems to enhance the overall positive experiences of the participants.

The rejuvenating and invigorating effects of sunlight were evident in the participants' reflections. One interviewee shared, "Being outside all day here was amazing! It made me feel way more energized and alive, I feel lighter" (I25F). Such sentiments are supported by scientific research. Exposure to natural sunlight has been associated with increased levels of vitality, reducing feelings of fatigue and enhancing overall well-being (Ponting & O'Brian, 2015).

Sunlight has long been associated with improved mood and overall well-being, a sentiment echoed by the participants. One interviewee remarked, "The sun was shining every day, and, yeah, it was just amazing" (I25F). The profound impact of sunlight on our psychological state can be traced back to literature findings (Wright et al., 2013).

The role of morning sunlight in shaping the trajectory of our day is profound. As the interviewees' experiences suggest, the act of waking up to a sunny morning at the surf camp not only uplifted their spirits but likely contributed to a series of positive physiological and psychological responses. The synergy of these effects—mood elevation, a positive start, enhanced cognitive function, and a regulated sleep-wake cycle—underscores the importance of sunlight in setting the stage for a productive and contented day. The way we begin our day can have cascading effects on our mood, productivity, and overall well-being. One interviewee's observation encapsulates this: "So now it was just nice to wake up in the morning to see the sun shining, not to worry about rain or whatever" (I7F). This comment underscores the psychological and physiological effects of sunlight exposure at the start of the day. Good weather and sunshine often encourage outdoor activities and social interactions. Engaging in physical activity outdoors, like surfing, can amplify the mood-enhancing effects of exercise. Additionally, social interactions, even brief ones, can elevate mood and contribute to a sense of belonging and happiness (Lisahunter & Stoodley (2021).

4.2.7. Evaluation of overall experience

The last question asked, referred to the general evaluation of the surf and camp experience. Interviewees were asked to refer to enhancement of well-being and social connection, same as their awareness of improvements for the daily life.

4.2.7.1. Change in mood

The surfing experience, as evaluated by the interviewees, not only offered a physical challenge but also presented opportunities for introspection, self-challenge, and personal growth. The citations emphasize the transformative power of surfing and staying in a surf camp in enhancing well-being, aligning with various psychological theories on self-improvement and well-being.

A common theme that emerges is the importance of taking breaks and indulging in self-reflection. An interviewee stated, "...it showed me that you always should also take a rest, sometimes in between" (I19F). This insight aligns with studies by Armhein (2016), which suggest that surfing and reflection can significantly enhance overall well-being.

Surfing, as an activity, brought opportunities for the participants to challenge themselves and confront their fears. This sentiment is shown in the comment, "...maybe challenge yourself a little bit and to also face your fears" (I19F). According to Csikszentmihalyi and Rathunde (1993), facing challenges and achieving a state of 'flow' can be instrumental in enhancing a participant's overall well-being.

Engaging in surfing led some participants to feel empowered and changed their self-perception. One individual said, "I feel a little bit empowered and very strong" (I5F). This feeling of empowerment and strength, both mentally and physically, echoes the findings of Ryan and Deci (2001) on self-determination theory, suggesting that new experiences can create a sense of autonomy and competence.

The social dimension of the surf camp experience played an important role in enhancing participants' happiness and well-being. The supportive community, opportunities to form new friendships, and the profound joy coming from meaningful interactions not only embedded in their experience but also align with several research underscoring the importance of social connections in human life.

A strong sense of camaraderie and support is strongly shown among the participants. One interviewee described the transformative experience of transitioning from someone who needs motivation to someone who motivates others, saying "...how people support each other, like especially the beginner surfers...I am those kind of person who tries to motivate another person and um, this actually felt super nice to also see your own progress from the person who needs to be motivated to the person who can motivate others. And yeah, it was really nice" (I19F). This mirrors findings by Lisahunter and Stoodley (2021). Being part of a supportive group can significantly enhance one's sense of self-worth and overall well-being, especially in surfing.

The surf camp provided an environment beneficial to forming new friendships and strengthening social bonds. An interviewee mentioned, "So it was a really good experience to even do the connections and have new friends" (I23F). Research by Houge Mackenzie and Brymer (2018) indicates that social connections in especially touristic settings play an important role in an improved quality of life and goal achievement.

The surf camp experience fostered an increased awareness of personal well-being among participants. Whether it was the recognition of the need for rest, the push towards personal growth through self-challenge, or the realization of the importance of physical health, the experience seemed to act as a catalyst for many to reflect on and reevaluate their life choices. This introspective journey, as described by the participants, aligns with psychological and health literature that underscores the interconnectedness of physical activity, rest, and mental well-being.

Many participants emphasized the value of trying new things and the joy coming from such experiences. It echoes research by Pomfret (2011), that highlights the role of curiosity and exploration of new skills to enhance long lasting eudaimonic well-being.

The progression from a novice to achieving a level of mastery in surfing brought immense joy to some participants. The statement, "I'm going to become a surfer," (I1F) encapsulates this sense of achievement and pride. This aligns with the Self-Determination Theory by Deci & Ryan (2000), which posits that mastery and competence are intrinsic motivators leading to enhanced well-being.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Main Findings of the study

The main aim of this dissertation was to understand to which extent surf tourism, through surf camp experiences, can contribute towards perceived well-being, using a qualitative approach.

Among the seven themes identified in the conducted interviews, the "Factors of Participation" section delves into the myriad motivations that spurred individuals to attend the surf camp. At the heart of these motivations lies a spectrum of desires and aspirations. Some participants were fueled by an innate urge for self-improvement, seeking to challenge themselves and set personal milestones. This drive for self-fulfillment was palpable among these individuals.

Yet not all were solely driven by personal goals. For a significant portion, the surf camp represented a social haven. It was an avenue to forge new relationships, meet like-minded individuals, and immerse themselves in a communal experience. The value of social integration and interaction was a predominant factor for their participation.

Adding another layer to these motivations was the allure of novelty. Several participants were drawn to the surf camp out of sheer curiosity and the desire to venture into uncharted territories. The pull of new experiences, of diving into unfamiliar hobbies, was a primary catalyst for their involvement.

Lastly, amidst the diverse motivations, there was a group seeking refuge. For them, the surf camp was more than just an activity; it was an escape. They yearned for a change of pace, a break from the monotony of their routine lives. The camp offered them a respite, a chance to momentarily disconnect from their daily stresses and immerse in a different environment.

In essence, the motivations for attending the surf camp were multifaceted and reflected a blend of personal aspirations, social desires, curiosity-driven pursuits, and the need for a brief escape.

Within the confines of the surf camp, participants found an unexpected sanctuary for mindfulness and active meditation. The vast ocean, with its rhythmic patterns, became more than just a body of water. For many, it served as a conduit for introspection, a mirror reflecting their innermost emotions. Amidst the waves, participants spoke of losing themselves in the moment, a state akin to 'flow' as discussed in literature (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993). This immersion into the present provided a unique space for self-discovery, allowing individuals to confront unresolved emotions and traumas, setting them on a path of transformation and personal growth.

Worthnoting, the insights gleaned did not remain confined to the shores. The surf camp experience had far-reaching implications, reshaping life perspectives. Participants returned with a renewed zest for life, a desire to realign their existence, reflecting sentiments that transcended mere physicality. The lessons from the surfboard became emblematic of life's broader challenges and opportunities, echoing the symbolic value of embracing change, a theme prevalent in works by Waterman (1993) and Zhang and Chen (2022).

Further amplifying the transformative power of the surf camp was the communal experience it offered. Participants spoke of shifts in character, of horizons broadened and of embracing an open-minded ethos. The experience was as much about personal growth as it was about the community. The diverse and welcoming surf camp milieu became a melting pot of life lessons. Here, amidst a tapestry of personalities, participants realized the intrinsic value of adaptability and the beauty of diversity, a sentiment resonating with Maslow's (1962) peak experiences and Waterman's (1993) concept of 'personal expressiveness'.

In its entirety, the surf camp, viewed through the prism of eudaimonia, transcends physical boundaries. It emerges as a realm of introspection, transformation, and an opportunity for deep reconnection, underscoring the potential of such experiences to serve as microcosms for self-exploration and holistic well-being.

The concept of body awareness stands as a foundational pillar of human existence. It's a tapestry of experiences that interweave the physical with the emotional, shaping the very essence of our interactions with the world around us. Within this context, surfing emerges not just as a sport, but as a nuanced platform that amplifies this awareness.

A significant number of participants found themselves transformed by their time at the surf camp. Daily immersion in the waves yielded tangible results; many reported an uptick in their general fitness levels. The arduous and repetitive act of paddling, a cornerstone of surfing, sculpted their upper bodies, enhancing stamina. But the benefits were not just muscular. As Waterman (1993) articulated, the endurance fostered by surfing also fortified the mind, imbuing participants with a resilience and determination that transcended the physical realm.

Diving deeper into the surfing experience, one encounters the profound mind-body connection it fosters. Especially for novices, surfing becomes a lesson in proprioception, urging them to understand and fine-tune their body's mechanics in tandem with the ever-changing moods of the ocean. Balance, a skill intrinsic to surfing, was identified as more than just a physical act. It is a dance of muscular coordination, mental focus, and kinesthesia, a testament to the intricate interplay between the mind and body. This alignment was beautifully echoed in literature, with Zhang and Chen (2022) highlighting how our cognition is deeply embedded in the dynamic interactions between our bodies and the environment.

Yet, the revelations of surfing are not confined to the tangible. Many participants spoke of the meditative quality of the sport. Riding the waves, they said, was akin to a dance of self-discovery, a journey into the depths of their being. The act of surfing, Seligman (2012) suggests, can be a wellspring of both eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. Participants did not just hone their physical prowess; they also tapped into a deeper mental well-being, unearthing joys and contentment that had long been buried.

Csikszentmihalyi and Rathunde (1993) spoke of the therapeutic allure of activities that induce a state of flow, and surfing, many found, was a manifestation of this concept. Amidst the waves, the world faded away, leaving surfers in a state of pure bliss, deeply connected to their surroundings and acutely aware of their bodies. This heightened

awareness, as Craig (2003) points out, is the essence of interoception, a sense of understanding the physiological state of one's body, a key to emotional regulation and holistic well-being.

In summation, the surf camp, set against the backdrop of the vast ocean, emerges as more than just a venue for a sport. It is a transformative space, a crucible of change where participants embark on a profound journey. They navigate the challenges of the waves, adapt, learn, and grow, deriving insights that offer a deeper understanding of not just their physical selves but the very essence of human existence.

In the frenetic rhythm of contemporary life, the quest for solace, stress relief, and restoration has never been more imperative. The surf camp, as illuminated by the participants, offers a sanctuary of reprieve, drawing on the therapeutic embrace of nature, especially the allure of aquatic environments (Qiu, Jin & Scott, 2021).

Surfing stands out as a unique blend of exhilaration and therapy. Beyond the rush of adrenaline and the fatigue of physical exertion, it offers a therapeutic balm, interweaving the physical, psychological, and emotional realms of the participants. As they rode the waves, the cathartic release of pent-up stress was palpable. The surf experience, with its rhythm of challenges and rewards, served as a crucible of restoration. Participants found solace amidst the waves, underscoring the multisensory therapeutic benefits of the ocean. This engagement with the vastness of the sea, as Csikszentmihalyi and Rathunde (1993) posits, anchors individuals in the present, a state of heightened mindfulness that dissolves residual stresses.

Yet, surfing is more than a solo act; it is a communal experience. The surf camp's ambiance and the camaraderie of fellow surfers further accentuated the stress-relief narrative. The welcoming embrace of the surfing community, with its open-minded and friendly ethos, played a pivotal role in dissipating stress, offering participants an escape from their quotidian stresses.

A small group of participants found the experience initially daunting. The presence of other surfers, the weight of expectations, and the sheer unfamiliarity of the sport were sources of stress. Even among these participants, the initial apprehension seemed to wane

as days progressed, with many finding their rhythm and comfort as they became more accustomed to the environment and the sport.

In essence, the surf camp experience is a mosaic of emotions. For most, it offers a therapeutic escape, a chance to merge with nature, and experience the restorative power of the ocean. For a few, it is a journey of overcoming initial fears and apprehensions. Yet, regardless of the starting point, the journey invariably leads towards introspection, growth, and a deeper understanding of oneself.

In an era marked by rapid change and mounting pressures, the allure of hedonic experiences — those that induce pleasure and happiness — is ever-growing. The surf camp, as described by participants, emerges as an oasis of such experiences, presenting a canvas where nature, physical activity, and human connection converge to paint moments of joy, satisfaction, and excitement.

For many, the very act of surfing becomes a cathartic release. Even as participants wrestled with waves and exhaustion, the euphoria of the experience, the sheer joy of being present amidst the expansive ocean, shone through.

Yet, hedonic experiences are not just about happiness; they also encompass a sense of achievement. As participants rode waves, each successful maneuver and each laugh shared after a stumble became sources of happiness, underscoring research that links moments of personal accomplishment to heightened feelings of joy (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

The communal aspect of the surf camp brought another layer to this hedonic tapestry. Bonds forged in the surf and stories shared in the camp's embrace fostered a sense of camaraderie that many found deeply satisfying. Such feelings resonate with findings by Kahneman, Diener and Schwarz (1999), emphasizing the happiness derived from human connections and shared experiences.

Freedom emerged as a central theme. The surf camp, with its detachment from daily routines, represented a realm of limitless possibilities for many. Surfing, with its raw expression and communion with the ocean, evoked feelings of liberation. This sentiment

of freedom and autonomy, as proposed by Ryan and Deci (2000), often leads to enhanced well-being. The camp served as an escape, a place where participants could momentarily disconnect from their lives and immerse themselves in a world defined by waves, sun, and sand.

Excitement was a recurring motif. The dynamic nature of the ocean, the thrill of surfing, and the process of mastering new techniques all contributed to this heightened state of arousal. Anticipation, engagement, and the joy of personal accomplishments intertwined to create an electrifying experience.

Lastly, participants expressed a deep sense of satisfaction with their surf camp experiences. From individual achievements in surfing to the bonds formed with fellow campers, the experience seemed to surpass many participants' expectations. This satisfaction wasn't just rooted in personal accomplishments; the sense of community, shared interests, and collective excitement played pivotal roles in amplifying the pleasure of the experience. Such findings align with research by Winter et. al. (2019) and Li et al. (2012), emphasizing the multifaceted benefits of shared experiences in enhancing well-being.

In sum, the surf camp stands as a beacon of hedonic experiences. It offers a space where the pleasures derived from nature, activity, and community fuse, culminating in moments of happiness, excitement, freedom, and profound satisfaction.

In a world fraught with stimuli, the participants of the surf camp found themselves deeply influenced by their external environment, particularly the whims of the ocean and the embrace of nature. This deep interplay between individuals and their surroundings became a pivotal element of their experience, shaping their emotions, reflections, and insights.

At the forefront, the ocean emerged as both a therapeutic and unpredictable entity. Participants spoke of an inherent reliance on the ocean's moods, highlighting their dependency on its caprices. This unpredictable nature of the ocean, as highlighted by Mayer et. al. (2009), brings forth a heightened sense of mindfulness. Amidst the vast blue

expanse, many felt a profound connection, seeing it as an opportunity to embrace a natural element, and to disconnect from the modern world's distractions. This interplay between man and nature was not merely about the physical act of surfing but extended to a deeper emotional and spiritual connection. Such sentiments, backed by Thompson et al. (2017), underscore the ocean's calming and transformative power.

The broader natural environment also played a significant therapeutic role. Participants felt an innate relaxation when surrounded by nature. Such feelings align with Kim and Thapa's (2018) concept, emphasizing the healing and well-being-enhancing effects of nature exposure. Furthermore, the sensory delights of nature, like feeling the sun and wind, took on a meditative quality for many. This tactile and visual communion with nature, as discussed by Li et al. (2012), accentuates the importance of sensory experiences in enhancing well-being.

Weather, and more precisely sunlight, was another pivotal external stimulus shaping the participants' experiences. The invigorating effects of sunlight became palpable in their reflections. Many spoke of the energy, vitality, and lightness they felt under the sun's embrace. These feelings are not just anecdotal; they are supported by scientific research. Studies, such as those by Ponting and O'Brian (2015), have shown that sunlight exposure can reduce feelings of fatigue and enhance overall well-being. This mood-elevating aspect of sunlight, backed by literature from Wright et al. (2013), was echoed in participants' sentiments. The profound impact of morning sunlight, especially at the surf camp, set a positive trajectory for their day. Many participants cherished waking up to a sunlit morning, which not only lifted their spirits but also laid the foundation for a day filled with positive experiences. This aligns with findings from Lisahunter and Stoodley (2021), emphasizing the synergy of sunlight and outdoor activities in enhancing mood and well-being.

In sum, the external stimuli, predominantly the ocean, nature, and sunlight, played a transformative role in the participants' surf camp experience. These elements, woven together, provided a backdrop that deeply influenced emotions, feelings of connection, and overall well-being. The surf camp, in this light, becomes a space where the confluence of natural elements shapes and enriches human experiences.

In their reflections upon their time at the surf camp, participants drew a vivid tapestry of experiences that transcended mere physical activity. The ocean waves did not just

challenge their physical prowess but beckoned them on a journey of introspection, self-discovery, and personal growth. This transformative essence, echoed by participants, finds resonance with established psychological theories centered on self-improvement and holistic well-being.

Central to their experiences was the profound realization of the importance of self-reflection and taking breaks. An observation by a participant, emphasizing the need for intermittent rest, aligns with insights from Armhein (2016). These moments of respite, coupled with the demanding surf, formed a delicate balance that fostered well-being.

A recurring theme among the narratives was the empowerment derived from confronting challenges. Surfing, with its unpredictability and demands, became a metaphor for life's trials. As participants braved the waves, they were not merely playing a sport; they were facing their fears, pushing boundaries, and experiencing growth. This transformative journey, where challenges metamorphosed into moments of 'flow', is reminiscent of Csikszentmihalyi's and Rathundes (1993) seminal work.

This newfound empowerment translated into a perceptible shift in self-perception. Participants spoke of feeling stronger, both mentally and physically. Such sentiments, highlighting the interplay of autonomy and competence, mirror the tenets of the Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2001).

But the surf camp was not just about individual journeys; it was also a confluence of shared experiences. The social dimension of the camp emerged as a significant wellspring of happiness and well-being. Participants cherished the supportive community, the camaraderie, and the profound connections they forged. These bonds, as underscored by Lisahunter and Stoodley (2021), enhanced their sense of belonging and self-worth. In this nurturing environment, participants transitioned—from seeking motivation to becoming pillars of motivation for others.

The surf camp experience, beyond the waves and friendships, was also a mirror for introspection. Participants emerged with an enriched awareness of their well-being. Their narratives underscored the significance of exploring new horizons. The sheer joy of

trying new things and the elation derived from personal achievements resonated with Pomfret's (2011) insights on the role of curiosity and skill exploration.

Many participants saw their progression in surfing as a metaphor for life. The thrill of transitioning from a beginner to achieving a semblance of mastery evoked immense pride. This journey, where each wave conquered became a testament to their resilience and growth, aligns with Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory. Many saw these experiences as indelible imprints that would shape their future approaches to challenges.

In essence, the surf camp was not just a getaway; it was a transformative journey. Amidst the dance of waves and golden sands, participants found joy, faced fears, forged connections, and embarked on a journey of self-discovery that promises to reverberate through their lives.

5.2. Practical implications for tourism organizations management

In the realm of surf tourism, there lies a treasure trove of benefits that resonate deeply with the modern traveler's quest for well-being, connection, and rejuvenation. As delineated in the thesis, surfing is not just a physical activity; it is a dance of human emotions, challenges, and personal growth. This holistic experience offers profound insights for tourism organizations.

The main part of the thesis underscores the transformative power of surf tourism on well-being. Echoing the sentiments of scholars like Zhang and Chen (2022) and Seligman (2012), the research shows the rejuvenative potential of immersing oneself in the rhythm of waves. For tourism organizations, this translates into a big opportunity. By spotlighting the well-being benefits of their offerings, they can craft narratives that beckon travelers seeking solace, relaxation, and personal growth.

Moreover, the methodology employed in the thesis, centered around semi-structured in-depth interviews. Such testimonials are marketing gold. Tourism organizations can harness these voices, weaving them into their promotional campaigns, giving potential tourists a glimpse into what awaits.

Nature's embrace, especially the ocean's vastness and serenity, emerges as a character in the surf tourism narrative. The benefits of being cocooned in nature, as highlighted in the thesis, emphasize the irreplaceable value of environments in tourism. For coastal tourism organizations, the message is clear: Celebrate and conserve the natural environment. By conservation efforts and foregrounding the tranquility of their locales, they can entice environmentally conscious tourists and those seeking an escape.

However, it is not just the ocean's allure that takes center stage. The communal character of the surf camp, the laughter, challenges, and triumphs, adds a social dimension to the experience. The implications for tourism management are manifold. By weaving community-building events, fostering a nurturing environment, and facilitating social interactions, tourism organizations can elevate the holistic experience they offer.

Yet, every journey has its hurdles. As the thesis aptly points out, the world of surfing, while exhilarating, also presents challenges and fears, especially for novices. Addressing these initial apprehensions becomes essential. Tourism organizations can cater to this by integrating beginner-friendly sessions, ensuring top-notch safety protocols, and providing expert guidance to ease newcomers into the surfing world.

In essence, the thesis offers a tapestry of insights, illuminating the multifaceted dimensions of surf tourism. As the world of travel evolves, tourism organizations, armed with these insights, stand at the threshold of crafting experiences that resonate deeply, offering travelers not just a getaway, but a journey of self-discovery, connection, and well-being.

5.3. Limitations of the study

5.3.1. Sample Size and Composition

The study involved participants from only one surf camp located in the Algarve. This means that the sample represents a very specific subset of the global population of surf camp participants. The experiences and perceptions of participants could vary widely based on a range of factors including the location of the surf camp, the quality of instruction, the demographics of the participants, and the overall atmosphere of the camp. As the study only involves one surf camp, it does not account for this potential variation, and therefore the findings may not be generalizable to other surf camps or to the broader population of individuals participating in surf tourism.

5.3.2. Self-Reported Data

The data collected during the interviews is based on participants' own recollections and perceptions of their experiences. This introduces several potential sources of bias. For example, participants may unintentionally exaggerate or minimize certain aspects of their experience, or they may not accurately remember all relevant details. Additionally, participants may provide responses that they believe are expected or socially acceptable, rather than their true feelings or experiences. This is known as social desirability bias. All these factors could affect the accuracy and reliability of the data collected.

5.3.3. Lack of Control Group

The study did not include a control group of individuals who did not participate in a surf camp. This makes it difficult to isolate the specific effects of the surf camp experience from other potential influences on participants' well-being. For example, it is possible that simply taking a vacation, being in a natural environment, or engaging in physical activity could have similar benefits to participating in a surf camp. Without a control

group, it is not possible to determine whether the observed benefits are specifically attributable to the surf camp experience or whether similar benefits could be achieved through other means.

5.3.4. Cultural and Geographic Context

The research was conducted in a specific geographic region, the Algarve, which has its own unique cultural and environmental characteristics. These characteristics could have a significant impact on participants' experiences and perceptions. For example, the local culture may influence the social interactions at the surf camp, the natural environment may affect participants' sense of connection with nature, and the characteristics of the surf camp itself (e.g., the quality of the facilities, the level of instruction) may affect participants' overall satisfaction with their experience. As the study was conducted in one specific location, the findings may not be applicable to other geographic regions or cultural contexts.

5.3.5. Qualitative Approach

The study employed a qualitative approach, which involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data, such as interviews. While this approach provides rich, detailed insights into participants' experiences and perceptions, it also has several limitations. First, the findings are based on the interpretation of the data by the researcher, which introduces a level of subjectivity and potential bias. Different researchers may interpret the same data in different ways. Second, qualitative research does not allow for statistical analysis or the establishment of causal relationships. Therefore, while the study can identify themes and patterns in the data, it cannot establish cause-and-effect relationships or quantify the magnitude of the effects observed.

5.3.6. Potential Themes Not Explored

Even though the study identified several key themes related to the surf camp experience, such as personal ambition, social influences, and emotional rejuvenation, there may be other important themes and factors that were not explored or identified in this study. For example, the study did not specifically examine the role of the quality of the surf instruction, or the interactions with other participants. All of these factors could have a significant impact on participants' experiences and well-being, and therefore the study may not capture the full range of factors that contribute to the observed effects.

5.4. Suggestions for future research

Future studies could investigate the long-term impacts of participation in surf camps on individuals' well-being, compare the impact of surf camps on well-being with other types of adventure or nature-based tourism activities, examine the impact of surf camps on well-being across different demographic groups, investigate the role of online social interactions in enhancing the social benefits of participating in surf camps, and explore the impact of surf camps on well-being in different geographical locations. To describe more precisely how to follow up the topic within future research the following point could be investigated:

1. **Diverse Locations:** Conduct similar studies in different geographical locations to understand if the location of the surf camp influences the well-being of the participants.
2. **Long-term Impact:** Investigate the long-term impacts of participation in surf camps on individuals' well-being, including both physical and mental aspects.
3. **Comparison with Other Activities:** Compare the impact of surf camps on well-being with other types of adventure or nature-based tourism activities.
4. **Impact on Different Demographics:** Examine the impact of surf camps on well-being across different demographic groups, such as different age groups, genders, or levels of surfing experience.

5. Online vs. Offline Interaction: Investigate the role of online social interactions (e.g., social media groups, online forums) in enhancing the social benefits of participating in surf camps.

CHAPTER 6. REFERENCES

- Anderson, J. (2013). Cathedrals of the surf zone: regulating access to a space of spirituality. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 14(8), 954-972.
- Arora, N. K., & Mishra, I. (2019). United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and environmental sustainability: race against time. *Environmental Sustainability*, 2(4), 339-342.
- Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) (2018). 20 adventure travel trends to watch in 2018. *Washington: ATTA*.
- Ballew, M. T., & Omoto, A. M. (2018). Absorption: How nature experiences promote awe and other positive emotions. *Ecopsychology*, 10(1), 26-35.
- Barbieri, C., & Sotomayor, S. (2013). Surf travel behavior and destination preferences: An application of the Serious Leisure Inventory and Measure. *Tourism management*, 35, 111-121.
- Bauer, J. J., Graham, L. E., Lauber, E. A., & Lynch, B. P. (2019). What growth sounds like: Redemption, self-improvement, and eudaimonic growth across different life narratives in relation to well-being. *Journal of personality*, 87(3), 546-565.
- Bell, S. L., Phoenix, C., Lovell, R., & Wheeler, B. W. (2015). Seeking everyday wellbeing: The coast as a therapeutic landscape. *Social Science & Medicine*, 142, 56-67.
- Bencsik, A., Horvath-Csikos, G., Juhasz, T., & Csanadi, A. (2019). Healthy lifestyle and behavior of Z Generation. *Journal of Eastern European and Central Asian Research (JEECAR)*, 6(2), 297-308.
- Bieger, T., & Beritelli, P. (2018). Dienstleistung 4.0—Der Tourismus als Lead-Industrie?. *Service Business Development: Strategien—Innovationen—Geschäftsmodelle Band 1*, 587-601.
- Blanchflower, D. G., & Oswald, A. J. (2011). International happiness: A new view on the measure of performance. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 25(1), 6-22.
- Borne, G. (2018). Riding the sustainable wave: Surfing and environmentalism. *Environmental Scientist (Toying with nature: Recreation and the environment)*, 27(4), 52-57.
- Britton, E., Kindermann, G., Domegan, C., & Carlin, C. (2020). Blue care: A systematic review of blue space interventions for health and wellbeing. *Health promotion international*, 35(1), 50-69.
- Brochado, A., Stoleriu, O., & Lupu, C. (2018). Surf camp experiences. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 22(1), 21-41.

- Bryman, A., & Cramer, D. (2012). *Quantitative data analysis with IBM SPSS 17, 18 & 19: A guide for social scientists*. Routledge.
- Buckley, R. (2002). Surf tourism and sustainable development in Indo-Pacific Islands. I. The industry and the islands. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, 10(5), 405-424.
- Buckley, R. (2012). Rush as a key motivation in skilled adventure tourism: Resolving the risk recreation paradox. *Tourism management*, 33(4), 961-970.
- Buckley, R., Zhong, L., & Martin, S. (2021). Mental health key to tourism infrastructure in China's new megapark. *Tourism Management*, 82, 104169.
- Caddick, N., Smith, B., & Phoenix, C. (2015). The effects of surfing and the natural environment on the well-being of combat veterans. *Qualitative health research*, 25(1), 76-86.
- Canosa, A., Graham, A., & Wilson, E. (2019). My overloved town: the challenges of growing up in a small coastal tourist destination (Byron Bay, Australia). In *Overtourism: Excesses, discontents and measures in travel and tourism* (pp. 190-204). Wallingford UK: CAB International.
- Carruthers, C., & Hood, C. D. (2004). The power of the positive: Leisure and well-being. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 38(2), 225-245.
- Craig, A. D. (2003). Interoception: the sense of the physiological condition of the body. *Current opinion in neurobiology*, 13(4), 500-505.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Rathunde, K. (1993). The measurement of flow in everyday life: toward a theory of emergent motivation.
- De Knop, P. (1990). Sport for all and active tourism. *World Leisure & Recreation*, 32(3), 30-36.
- DeJonckheere, M., & Vaughn, L. M. (2019). Semistructured interviewing in primary care research: a balance of relationship and rigour. *Family medicine and community health*, 7(2).
- Denton, H., & Aranda, K. (2020). The wellbeing benefits of sea swimming. Is it time to revisit the sea cure?. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 12(5), 647-663.
- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological bulletin*, 95(3), 542.
- Doering, A. (2018). From he'e nalu to Olympic sport: A century of surfing evolution. In *T. Hinch & J. Higham, Sport Tourism Development* (3 rd ed.), pp. 200-203. Bristol: Channel View Publications.
- Dolnicar, S., & Fluker, M. (2003). Behavioural market segments among surf tourists: investigating past destination choice. *Journal of Sport Tourism*, 8(3), 186-196.
- Finney, B. R., & Houston, J. D. (1996). *Surfing: A history of the ancient Hawaiian sport*. Pomegranate.

- Fofana, N. K., Latif, F., Sarfraz, S., Bashir, M. F., & Komal, B. (2020). Fear and agony of the pandemic leading to stress and mental illness: An emerging crisis in the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. *Psychiatry Research*, *291*, 113230.
- Foley, R. (2015). Swimming in Ireland: Immersions in therapeutic blue space. *Health & Place*, *35*, 218-225.
- Francis, J. J., Johnston, M., Robertson, C., Glidewell, L., Entwistle, V., Eccles, M. P., & Grimshaw, J. M. (2010). What is an adequate sample size? Operationalising data saturation for theory-based interview studies. *Psychology and health*, *25*(10), 1229-1245.
- Gibson, H. J., & Fairley, S. (2022). Sport, Tourism, and Social Impacts. *The Oxford Handbook of Sport and Society*, 357.
- Godfrey, C., Devine-Wright, H., & Taylor, J. (2015). The positive impact of structured surfing courses on the wellbeing of vulnerable young people. *Community Practitioner*, *88*(1), 26-29.
- Godovykh, M., & Tasci, A. D. (2020). Customer experience in tourism: A review of definitions, components, and measurements. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *35*, 100694.
- Goldy, S. P., & Piff, P. K. (2020). Toward a social ecology of prosociality: why, when, and where nature enhances social connection. *Current opinion in psychology*, *32*, 27-31.
- Hall, C. M. (1992). *Hallmark tourist events: impacts, management and planning*. Belhaven Press.
- Hansmann, R., Hug, S. M., & Seeland, K. (2007). Restoration and stress relief through physical activities in forests and parks. *Urban forestry & urban greening*, *6*(4), 213-225.
- Herrman, H., Saxena, S., & Moodie, R. (2005). *Promoting mental health: concepts, emerging evidence, practice: a report of the World Health Organization, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse in collaboration with the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation and the University of Melbourne*. World Health Organization.
- Higham, J., & Hinch, T. (2002). Tourism, sport and seasons: the challenges and potential of overcoming seasonality in the sport and tourism sectors. *Tourism management*, *23*(2), 175-185.
- Hignett, A., White, M. P., Pahl, S., Jenkin, R., & Froy, M. L. (2018). Evaluation of a surfing programme designed to increase personal well-being and connectedness to the natural environment among 'at risk' young people. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, *18*(1), 53-69.
- Holm, M. R., Lugosi, P., Croes, R. R., & Torres, E. N. (2017). Risk-tourism, risk-taking and subjective well-being: A review and synthesis. *Tourism Management*, *63*, 115-122.

- Houge Mackenzie, S. & Brymer, E. (2018). Conceptualizing adventurous nature sport: A positive psychology perspective. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 21, 79-91.
- Houge Mackenzie, S., & Hodge, K. (2020). Adventure recreation and subjective well-being: A conceptual framework. *Leisure Studies*, 39(1), 26-40.
- Hritz, N., & Franzidis, A. F. (2018). Exploring the economic significance of the surf tourism market by experience level. *Journal of Destination marketing & management*, 7, 164-169.
- Hritz, N., & Ross, C. (2010). The perceived impacts of sport tourism: An urban host community perspective. *Journal of sport management*, 24(2), 119-138.
- Kallio, H., Pietilä, A. M., Johnson, M., & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 72(12), 2954-2965.
- Kim, M., & Thapa, B. (2018). Perceived value and flow experience: Application in a nature-based tourism context. *Journal of destination marketing & management*, 8, 373-384.
- Keyes, C. L. (2002). The mental health continuum: From languishing to flourishing in life. *Journal of health and social behavior*, 207-222.
- Knaap, C., & Vanneste, D. (2021). Issues of conflict management in a context of increasing surf tourism. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 9(2), 65-82.
- Knobloch, U., Robertson, K., & Aitken, R. (2017). Experience, emotion, and eudaimonia: A consideration of tourist experiences and well-being. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56(5), 651-662.
- Nikolaidis, N., Lilli, M., Kolokotsa, D., Somarakis, G., Stagakis, S., & Lemaitre, F. (2020). Classification of nature-based solutions. *ThinkNature Nature-Based Solutions Handbook*. ThinkNature project funded by the EU Horizon.
- Li, S., Xie, Z., Shao, J., Xiao, C., Tian, L., Zhao, R., ... & Guo, W. (2012). Subjective well-being of the elderly in Xi Cheng District, Beijing. *Shanghai archives of psychiatry*, 24(6), 335.
- Lisahunter, & Stoodley, L. (2021). Bluespace, senses, wellbeing, and surfing: Prototype cyborg theory-methods. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 45(1), 88-112.
- Loy, J. W. (1968). The nature of sport: A definitional effort. *Quest*, 10(1), 1-15.
- Luhmann, M., Hawkey, L. C., Eid, M., & Cacioppo, J. T. (2012). Time frames and the distinction between affective and cognitive well-being. *Journal of research in personality*, 46(4), 431-441.
- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success?. *Psychological bulletin*, 131(6), 803.

- Mach, L., & Ponting, J. (2018). Governmentality and surf tourism destination governance. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 26(11), 1845-1862.
- Marshall, J., Ferrier, B., Ward, P. B., & Martindale, R. (2020). "I feel happy when I surf because it takes stress from my mind": An Initial Exploration of Program Theory within Waves for Change Surf Therapy in Post-Conflict Liberia. *J. Sport Dev*, 1(9).
- Martin, S. A., & Assenov, I. (2012). The genesis of a new body of sport tourism literature: A systematic review of surf tourism research (1997–2011). *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 17(4), 257-287.
- Martin, S. A., & Assenov, I. (2014). Investigating the importance of surf resource sustainability indicators: Stakeholder perspectives for surf tourism planning and development. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 11(2), 127-148.
- Matos, M. G., Santos, A. C., Fauvelet, C., Marta, F., Evangelista, E. S., Ferreira, J., ... & Mattila, M. (2017). Surfing for social integration: mental health and well-being promotion through surf therapy among institutionalized young people. *HSOA journal of community medicine & public health care*, 4(1), 1-6.
- Mayer, F. S., Frantz, C. M., Bruehlman-Senecal, E., & Dolliver, K. (2009). Why is nature beneficial? The role of connectedness to nature. *Environment and behavior*, 41(5), 607-643.
- McCabe, S., & Johnson, S. (2013). The happiness factor in tourism: Subjective well-being and social tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 41, 42-65.
- McNeil, D. G., Singh, A., & Chambers, T. (2022). Exploring nature-and social-connectedness as mediators of the relationship between nature-based exercise and subjective wellbeing. *Ecopsychology*, 14(4), 226-234.
- Mielly, M., & Peticca-Harris, A. (2022). Local worker perspectives from Nicaraguan surf tourism: revisiting career anchors in non-standard work contexts. *Career development international*, 27(2), 245-259.
- Mirehie, M., & Gibson, H. J. (2020). Women's participation in snow-sports and sense of well-being: a positive psychology approach. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 51(4), 397-415.
- Moutinho, L., Dionísio, P., & Leal, C. (2007). Surf tribal behaviour: a sports marketing application. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 25(7), 668-690.
- Murphey M. and Bernal M. (2008). The impact of surfing on the local economy of Mundaka. Commissioned by Save The Waves Coalition 2008. Spain.
- Nourbakhsh, T. (2008). A qualitative exploration of female surfers: recreation specialization, motivations, and perspectives. Master's thesis. California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA.

- Olive, R., & Wheaton, B. (2021). Understanding blue spaces: Sport, bodies, wellbeing, and the sea. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 45(1), 3-19.
- O'Brien, D., & Ponting, J. (2013). Sustainable surf tourism: A community centered approach in Papua New Guinea. *Journal of Sport Management*, 27(2), 158-172.
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research*, 42, 533-544.
- Pessot, E., Spoladore, D., Zangiacomì, A., & Sacco, M. (2021). Natural resources in health tourism: a systematic literature review. *Sustainability*, 13(5), 2661.
- Pomfret, G. (2011). Package mountaineer tourists holidaying in the French alps; an evaluation of key influences encouraging their participation. *Tourism Management*, 32(3), 501-510.
- Pomfret, G., & Bramwell, B. (2016). The characteristics and motivational decisions of outdoor adventure tourists: A review and analysis. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 19(14), 1447-1478.
- Ponting, J., & O'Brien, D. (2015). Regulating "Nirvana": Sustainable surf tourism in a climate of increasing regulation. *Sport Management Review*, 18(1), 99-110.
- Poon, K. T., Teng, F., Wong, W. Y., & Chen, Z. (2016). When nature heals: Nature exposure moderates the relationship between ostracism and aggression. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 48, 159-168.
- Qiu, M., Jin, X., & Scott, N. (2021). Sensescapes and attention restoration in nature-based tourism: Evidence from China and Australia. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 39, 100855.
- Riepenhausen, A., Wackerhagen, C., Reppmann, Z. C., Deter, H. C., Kalisch, R., Veer, I. M., & Walter, H. (2022). Positive cognitive reappraisal in stress resilience, mental health, and well-being: A comprehensive systematic review. *Emotion Review*, 14(4), 310-331.
- Roberts, M., & Ponting, J. (2020). Waves of simulation: Arguing authenticity in an era of surfing the hyperreal. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 55(2), 229-245.
- Rogerson, M., Gladwell, V. F., Gallagher, D. J., & Barton, J. L. (2016). Influences of green outdoors versus indoors environmental settings on psychological and social outcomes of controlled exercise. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 13(4), 363.
- Román, C., Borja, A., Uyarra, M. C., & Pouso, S. (2022). Surfing the waves: Environmental and socio-economic aspects of surf tourism and recreation. *Science of the Total Environment*, 826, 154122.

- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual review of psychology*, 52(1), 141-166.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2006). Self-regulation and the problem of human autonomy: Does psychology need choice, self-determination, and will?. *Journal of personality*, 74(6), 1557-1586.
- Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 57(6), 1069.
- Ryff, C. D. (2018). Eudaimonic well-being. In *Diversity in harmony-Insights from psychology: Proceedings of the 31st International Congress of Psychology* (pp. 375-395).
- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95, 542-575.
- Roberts, M., & Ponting, J. (2020). Waves of simulation: Arguing authenticity in an era of surfing the hyperreal. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 55(2), 229-245.
- Scarfe, B. E., Elwany, M. H. S., Mead, S. T., & Black, K. P. (2003). The science of surfing waves and surfing breaks-a review.
- Schänzel, H. A., & Yeoman, I. (2015). Trends in family tourism. *Journal of tourism futures*, 1(2), 141-147.
- Schimmack, U., Schupp, J., & Wagner, G. G. (2008). The influence of environment and personality on the affective and cognitive component of subjective well-being. *Social Indicators Research*, 89, 41-60.
- Seligman, M. E. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Simon and Schuster.
- Stein, A., & Ramaseshan, B. (2016). Towards the identification of customer experience touch point elements. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 30, 8-19.
- Street, G., James, R., & Cutt, H. (2007). The relationship between organised physical recreation and mental health. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, 18(3), 236-239.
- Tov, W. (2018). Well-being concepts and components.
- Towner, N., & Davies, S. (2019). Surfing tourism and community in Indonesia. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 17(5), 642-661.

- Vindegard, N., & Benros, M. E. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic and mental health consequences: Systematic review of the current evidence. *Brain, behavior, and immunity*, 89, 531-542.
- Völker, S., & Kistemann, T. (2011). The impact of blue space on human health and well-being—Salutogenetic health effects of inland surface waters: A review. *International journal of hygiene and environmental health*, 214(6), 449-460.
- Voigt, C., Howat, G., & Brown, G. (2010). Hedonic and eudaimonic experiences among wellness tourists: An exploratory enquiry. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 13(3), 541-562.
- Waterman, A. S. (1993). Two conceptions of happiness: Contrasts of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) and hedonic enjoyment. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 64(4), 678.
- Weber, K. (2001). Outdoor adventure tourism: A review of research approaches. *Annals of tourism research*, 28(2), 360-377.
- White, M., Smith, A., Humphries, K., Pahl, S., Snelling, D., & Depledge, M. (2010). Blue space: The importance of water for preference, affect, and restorativeness ratings of natural and built scenes. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 30(4), 482-493.
- Wiklund, J., Nikolaev, B., Shir, N., Foo, M. D., & Bradley, S. (2019). Entrepreneurship and well-being: Past, present, and future. *Journal of business venturing*, 34(4), 579-588.
- Wolsko, C., Lindberg, K., & Reese, R. (2019). Nature-based physical recreation leads to psychological well-being: Evidence from five studies. *Ecopsychology*, 11(4), 222-235.
- Zhang, S., & Chen, Y. (2022). A Study on Embodied Experience of Surfing Tourism Based on Grounded Theory—Take China's Hainan Province as an Example. *Behavioral Sciences*, 12(11), 407.

7. APPENDICIES

Appendix I. Informed consent prior to interviews

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of the Study: “The role of surf tourism on perceived well- being”

Institution: University of the Algarve, Faculty of Economic

Name of Researcher: Kim Tara Phillis Volkamer

Contact details: kim.volkamer@web.de

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time without giving any reason.
3. I understand that any personal information I provide the researchers will be kept strictly confidential, anonymised, and digitally stored with password protection for audit purposes.
4. I agree to take part in the above study.
5. I agree to the interview being audio-recorded (this is only being requested to help with analysis)

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Kim Volkamer

Researcher

Date

Signature

Copies: 1 for participant
 1 for researcher

Title of interview:**Participant Information Sheet**

As part of the Master in Tourism Organizations Management at the University of the Algarve (UALG), the following study is conducted by Kim Volkamer. The research uses semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth information about the role of tourism on perceived well-being.

What will you be required to do?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The researcher seeks to gather views and opinions on (approx. 5- 15 minutes). The interviews will be conducted one-on-one.

To participate in this research, individuals must (criteria):

- Age cohort: 25-55
- Full- time employee
- Physically not limited
- No previous surf/ surf camp experience
- Minimum length of stay 1 week

Confidentiality

The identity of participants will be treated confidentially. If the participant agrees, the interview will be audio-recorded, but this will only be used to aid analysis, and any findings/reporting of the results will be anonymised.

All data and personal information are stored securely per the GDPR and the University of Algarve's data protection requirements. The interview recordings and survey responses are kept safe and only accessed by relevant parties, such as the researcher and her supervisors. The consent forms and anonymised interview recordings are digitally stored with password protection for audit purposes. All non-digital material is securely stored in a locked file drawer in the researcher's (locked) office at the University of the Algarve. Any printed documents, such as copies of the interviews used for data analysis, will be securely stored while in use and discarded via the universities secure document elimination system when no longer required.

Deciding whether to participate

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures, or requirements for participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher. Should you choose to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

For any questions or queries, please contact Kim Volkamer via email under a74152@ualg.pt

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix II. Interview example I9M

Interviewee XXXX – I9M

Interviewer: Hi, XXXX. Thank you so much for participating in the studies explained before. We're going to talk about your experience in the surf camp in Lagos and how this may or may not have impacted your overall well being and happiness. Before we start, can you please tell me your name, your profession, and where you're from?

Interviewee: Hi, I'm XXXX, 34 years old. I'm from Cape Town, South Africa, and I am a yoga teacher. It was my first time experiencing surfing in the Algarves this week.

Interviewer: Okay, perfect. You surfed already five days, is that correct?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, amazing. Before you actually arrived here, what was the main motivational factor that made you book the surf camp experience?

Interviewee: I was looking to have a vacation, and I thought tying my vacation up with a surfing holiday and learning how to surf would be a great way to experience my holiday.

Interviewer: Did you set any specific goals before you arrived here?

Interviewee: I didn't really have any goals in mind, although I had some expectations in myself coming from a movement background, and I've done a little bit of skateboarding before, so not really too many goals. And maybe another goal was to meet some really cool, interesting, like minded people.

Interviewer: Was that your first time trying any water spots?

Interviewee: I've ridden the jet Ski before, and I've done a little bit of sailing.

Interviewer: Okay. But nothing like board related?

Interviewee: No. I've been wakeboarding maybe once before and snowboarding a few times, but other than that, not really okay.

Interviewer: How was your expectations regarding the surf activity itself? So not taking in consideration the surroundings and the people you might have met, did you think that surfing would be easy, that you would learn it fast, or were you a bit concerned?

Interviewee: I thought that I would be, again, very good at surfing, but I was very humbled by the challenges that I faced when in the water. I thought that I would be able

to do a lot more than I was, actually, and it was challenging, but also very rewarding at the same time.

Interviewer: What would you say was challenging?

Interviewee: For me, the hardest part was fighting against the waves. It was hard to read them and to make sure that I was in the right position when they came, and then I had to catch them, which I struggled a little bit, even thinking I was a very strong person. But again, I just had a great time.

Interviewer: Okay, amazing. After your experience, would you say that you developed yourself? Meaning is there maybe a change happening in your perspectives of life can be positive or negative?

Interviewee: Yeah, for sure. I was, again humbled by the experience, thinking I would have been a lot better than I was, so I guess it just put me in my place a little bit and gave me a stronger respect for Mother Nature.

Interviewer: Talking about Mother Nature, were the environmental factors influencing your experience a lot?

Interviewee: Of course, Portugal is so beautiful with the beaches and the cliffs and the Algarve and the people are amazing and great weather. Water was a little bit colder than what I thought, which added another element of challenge. But other than that, it was amazing to be out there with some of the fish and some other water life that was there.

Interviewer: Okay, amazing. You said it was challenging. Did you experience any changes in your physical abilities? Like, did you improve any skills, any physical skills during your week?

Interviewee: I found that my shoulders definitely got a lot more tight, so my down dog wasn't as flexible. But I also found that I'm a lot stronger after surfing for one week.

Interviewer: A lot of people, they complain that surfing is really hard because you use muscles you never used before. Was this impacting you negatively?

Interviewee: No. Coming from a yoga background, I thought that it was really nice to be able to experience different kinds of movement and different kinds of tightness within my body, and I really enjoy the ability to learn different skills that require a sense of physicality.

Interviewer : Okay, amazing. Do you remember the first time you stood up on your first day?

Interviewee: Of course.

Interviewer: How would you describe this feeling?

Interviewee: A little bit wobbly and quite an adrenaline. I thought I was going very fast, and I felt also quite a lot of fear at the same time, more than I would have expected.

Interviewer: Fear?

Interviewee: Yeah. I was scared of hitting somebody or falling and hitting the surfboard. I was worried also of being held underwater and the turbulence of the waves or even maybe hitting the ground. And just not knowing can be very scary.

Interviewer: Okay. Did this fear changed, or it's still there after five days of surfing?

Interviewee: There definitely is a certain sense of fear, especially as I begin to progress and push myself more, then the fear just is accordance to where I'm at and my level, I feel. But if I was surfing the same waves as I was on day one, then I feel I wouldn't have that same kind of fear anymore.

Interviewer: Okay, great. Would you say that the community you were part of during your stay in the surf camp had a positive impact on your experience, on your fear?

Interviewee: Even for sure, it was great watching other people that didn't look as physically adaptive as me pushing me a lot more because I was like, man, I'm super fit. I'm super strong and flexible. And then I was watching people that weren't as strong and flexible, and that made me push a lot more. And also everyone at the camp in Portugal seemed very supportive and encouraging to kind of overcome that.

Interviewer: I mean, I don't know if the job as a yoga teacher brings a lot of stress, but would you say that staying in a surf camp and surfing itself can have a positive impact on your stress level?

Interviewee: There's no doubt that it had a very positive effect on my stress level, although I don't feel a lot of stress in my day to day. Just kind of not having to work or teach yoga and be a student as opposed to a teacher was really nourishing for me as a human.

Interviewer: Was there any external elements that helped you to feel less stressed?

Interviewee: I guess just being in the water surrounded by blue space, I had a very great sense of a calming element to my mental state, regardless of how I thought I was doing in the water or what I was achieving. Being in nature and away from the regular day to day activities definitely had a positive effect on my mental clarity and space.

Interviewer: Looking that you only have two days left, do you think you can take something long term out of your experience here?

Interviewee: Yeah, for sure. I would love to go surfing again and continue progressing, regardless of how challenging it is. And I think I'll be back in Portugal maybe, or somewhere else surfing for my next vacation.

Interviewer: Amazing. One last question regarding the Pandemic COVID-19 hit us all very hard. Would you say that you are now more aware and more driven to enhance your well being and your happiness, or was that nothing that impacted you?

Interviewee: Yeah, for sure. I feel I had COVID pretty bad myself, and it's quite challenging to be in such a vulnerable state physically and mentally, and I want to do everything that I can in my power to maintain strength of my body and therefore, hopefully positively affect my immunity as well.

Interviewer: Okay, amazing. Well, that's it. Thank you so much for participating, and I hope you enjoy your last two days.

Interviewee: Thank you.