

Therapeutic Practices of Sound Healing to Enhance Spiritual Well-being

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Abstract

The aim of this conceptual is to discusses the current phenomenon of wellness tourism through the sound healing therapeutic practice. The paper will discuss some significant information, including; the important of sound healing and wellness tourism, then describes about Asia's wellness market, wellness tourism and sound healing therapy, and recommendation for future research. Sound healing can be using music or Tibet singing bowl. The benefits of sound can heal people mood, anxiety, stress and increase peaceful spirituality. Hence, this paper provides some important literature review in related to wellness tourism through sound healing practice and recommendation for future research.

Keyword: Sound Healing; Wellness Tourism; Spiritual well-being

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Introduction

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to discuss therapeutic practices of sound healing and current study related to wellness tourism development.

Wellness comprises sense of well-being and sees a person as consisting body, mind and spirit (Konu, 2010). It is believed that the term wellness has emerged from the WHO notion of well-being and the concept of fitness (Koncul, 2012; Price & McCallum, 2015). In term of well-being usually lacking in clarity with the same meaning; one example; it define as an individual's physical, mental, social, and environment status with each aspect interacting (Kiefer, 2008, p. 244). Wellness in some countries like Germany, Austria and Switzerland considerable emphasis on medical wellness (Voigt & Pforr, 2014). In the Central and Southeast European countries enhanced on sunshine, sea air, and thalassotherapy (M. Smith & Puczkó, 2014). Whereas, Asian countries, especially spiritual activities, including yoga, meditation, and massages are considered important daily activities (Kelly, 2012; Stausberg, 2014). The popular spiritual retreat activity are such as; meditation, yoga, and attend silence talk program at ashram or in temple (A. Ashton, 2018).

Particularly, the sound healing can help spiritual and mind retreat, especially using Tibet bowl as an instrument to perform therapy for mind soul since an ancient time (Beaulieu & Perez-Martinez, 2018; Goldman, 2017; Longdon, 2020). Sound healing refers to sound bath, sound therapy, or sound meditation (Goldsby, Goldsby, McWalters, & Mills, 2022, p. 2). Sound healing or sound bath basically utilizes specific bell-like vibrational musical instrument called, singing bowls, or can use gongs and other vibrational musical instruments (Goldsby et al., 2022). Sound is fascinated therapeutic because it impacts on our nervous system and balance our health well-being (D'Angelo, 2005). Whenever possible being in a sound environment in tune with our nature in whatever form will lead toward liberation and true happiness, in turn give well-being life (D'Angelo, 2005).

The paper will discuss some significant information, including; the important of sound healing and wellness tourism, then describes about Asia's wellness market, wellness tourism and sound healing therapy, and recommendation for future research on wellness tourism destination development.



The important of sound healing and wellness tourism

People have been traveling to different places that have specific natural resources since early historical ages with desire of relaxation (Goodrich, 1993). Relaxation might infer to physical; mind, soul and spiritual well-being and it is one of the motives of tourists among others while taking a vacation (Pearce & Lee, 2005). Tourist motivations elucidate the factors which influence a tourist to travel. Motivation is the impelling and compelling force behind all behavior (Crompton, 1979). The motive of many vacation makers is in a response to psychological depletion and is an opportunity to allow the tourist to replenish, restore, and provides the opportunity for ego-enhancement and self-recognition (Dann, 1977). Henceforth, there is always a kind of motivation behind tourism, such as to relax and experience spiritual wellness (A. Ashton, 2018). Growing needs of relaxation and wellness in current scenario has increased the demand of tourists with wellness purposes. Wellness tourism product can be included, spa for health, yoga and meditation (Suetrong & Ashton, 2021). It is important to heal with sound if experiencing fatigue, feeling anxious, or having trouble sleeping, vibration of sound will heal (Goldman, 2017).

On the other hand, wellness tourism as the powerful intersection of two large and growing industries: the \$2.6 trillion tourism industry and the \$4.5 trillion wellness industry in the inaugural edition of the Global Wellness Tourism Economy report (Global Wellness Institute, 2013). GWI also estimated that wellness tourism will be growing more than twice as fast as general tourism in future. In 2018 in the report of Global Wellness Tourism Economy, Global Wellness Institute, wellness tourism is slated to grow at an average annual rate of 7.5 per cent by 2022. This is higher than the projected 6.4 per cent rate for the annual growth of overall global tourism. Wellness tourism burst into the consumer consciousness just a very few years ago, and it's hard to grasp the speed of its growth and evolution. Wellness hospitality and travel are now converging in unprecedented ways, from the healthy hotel concept going utterly mainstream to airports, airlines, and cruises injecting so much wellness programming, to the profusion of ever-more-creative wellness destinations, retreats and tours. The wellness concept is transforming almost every aspect of the travel industry and wellness tourism will only grow faster in years ahead, as it lies at the powerful intersection of two massive, booming industries: the \$2.6 trillion tourism industry and the \$4.2 trillion wellness market" according to



Global Wellness Tourism Economy report (Global Wellness Institute, 2021; Global Wellness Institute, 2018a, 2019).

Our body feels the need to get away from stress and the weariness of long and monotonous hours of work. However, wellness tourism is not restricted with merely few therapeutic measures like spa, meditation, yoga, sauna bath but there is other spiritual retreat like sound healing and healing with music, are also getting attention in recent time (A. S. Ashton, 2021; M. K. Smith, 2022).

Sound healing which is considered as a traditional therapy but it is becoming popular and an effective tool for mental wellness. Poor mood and elevated anxiety are linked to increased incidence of disease. the effects of sound meditation, specifically Tibetan singing bowl meditation, on mood, anxiety, pain, and spiritual well-being (Goldsby, Goldsby, McWalters, & Mills, 2017). As compared with pre-meditation, following the sound meditation participants reported significantly less tension, anger, fatigue, and depressed mood. Tibetan singing bowl meditation may be a feasible low-cost low technology intervention for reducing feelings of tension, anxiety, and depression, and increasing spiritual well-being. This meditation type may be especially useful in decreasing tension in individuals who have not previously practiced this form of meditation (Goldsby et al., 2017, 2022).

Asia's wellness market

According to the report on, UNWTO/GTERC 2019, Asia and Pacific region has been one of the fastest-growing tourism regions with 208million international arrivals in 2010, increasing 75% to 363.6 million by 2019. Much of the growth has been led by Northeast Asia, which grew from 111.5 million arrivals in 2010 to 172.2 million by 2019. Southeast Asia also grew substantially, nearly doubling from 70.5 million to 138.6 million. Other regions also grew substantially, but with fewer arrivals Oceania from11.5 million to 17.5 million and South Asia from 14.7 million to 35.3 million. International receipts also showed impressive growth with a 12% increase to \$442 billion from 2017 to 2018 overall and increases in every subregion.

However, Asian travel had dropped precipitously because of the COVID-19 outbreak. Wellness tourism will undoubtedly also experience declines in the region, although it is expected to recover after the crisis passes. Over 99% of the COVID-19 cases and most of the



deaths had been concentrated in the PRC (Abiad, Arao, & Dagli, 2020), but this changed rapidly over the following months as cases and deaths increased faster and in greater numbers in several other countries (Sohrabi et al., 2020).

The impact on the wellness tourism sector was not yet known, but since flights throughout the region have been severely curtailed, this sector and every other tourism sector has been negatively impacted. One can only hope that the virus will soon stop spreading; that a vaccine is discovered and distributed rapidly; and that the tourism industry, including wellness tourism, can resume its growth trajectory.

As consequence, wellness tourism has been a high priority in Asia. Recently, Asian countries saw major growth in the wellness industry with the PRC leading the. From 2015 to 2017, the PRC increased their number of wellness trips by about 22 million and India followed with an increase of about 17 million wellness trips. Travelers to and within Asia accounted for \$136.7 billion (21.1%) of total wellness tourism revenue and a 10.9% compound annual growth rate. For the PRC, the wellness tourism market is mostly internal and not yet considered a main attraction for international visitors. The popularity of wellness tourism in these countries is not surprising since, historically, these societies have emphasized mind-body connections, such as traditional medicine, meditation and Ayurveda in India, and the deep spiritualism and oneness with nature of Buddhism (Global Wellness Institute, 2021; Global Wellness Institute, 2018b, 2019; Sohrabi et al., 2020).

Among these countries, as reported by the GWI report, wellness tourism is included in their national tourism strategies (as of 2018): the PRC, India, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Thailand, the ROK, and the Philippines. India and Thailand are profiled in the case studies, as well as Sri Lanka. In addition, wellness tourism is a target for national investment promotion for all these countries and for Bhutan; Fiji; the Maldives; New Zealand; and Taipei, China. India, for example, set up a National Medical & Wellness Tourism Promotion Board to provide policy advice and measures to support wellness tourism, such as guidelines for quality and training, financial assistance, and investment promotion for wellness centers catering to tourists. Other countries in Asia and Pacific that include tourism in their national tourism strategies are Bhutan and the Maldives (Dam, Sabacan, Sim, & Thirumaran, 2021).



In summary, markets (demand and behaviour), destinations (development and promotion), and development environments (policies and impacts) emerged as the main three research themes in medical-health-wellness tourism (Zhong, Deng, Morrison, Coca-Stefaniak, & Yang, 2021). Medical-health-wellness tourism will integrate with other care sectors and become more embedded in policy-making related to sustainable development, especially with regards to quality-of-life initiatives (Zhong et al., 2021). In order to industrialize wellness tourism, it is necessary to increase the healing effectiveness and product value of wellness tourism by organically linking wellness resources specialized by region (Kim, 2021). There is a need of awareness towards sustainability and societal impact. Evaluation of land-use suitability can prevent problems, such as environmental disruption, wastage of resources, and ecological disruption, when unsuitable tourism-based exploration is undertaken in an area (Pan, Yang, Han, Lu, & Liu, 2019).

Wellness tourism and sound healing therapy

Wellness tourism has tremendously become popular amongst tourists in current scenario (Anannukul & Yoopetch, 2022; Kunaviktikul, 2022). Now many tourist experience wellness tourism due to increasing stress in today's life style, such mental health problem, hyper tension, stress and anxiety (He, Liu, & Li, 2022) . There has been always a social phenomenon across the culture and society in the world that if a person is sick or ill, he or she is always suggested by doctors to take a break from usual routine and visit some distant place for healing (Braveman & Gottlieb, 2014). Hence, tourists have been traveling since long with the aim of receiving specific healing treatments or enhancing their mental, physical, or spiritual well-being. Wellness tourism has experienced rapid development in recent decades (Cohen, Elliott, Oates, Schembri, & Mantri, 2017). Based on the transmission model of inspiration, to explore the antecedents and consequences of tourist inspiration in the context of wellness tourism, wellness tourism experience, which in turn has a positive influence on tourist engagement (He, Liu, & Li, 2021). Quoting "openness to experience" as a moderating factor, it uncovered significant and positive relationships between experience and inspiration when tourists have high levels of openness to experience (He et al., 2021).



Nevertheless, wellness tourism is a novel concept and proposes the idea of wellness of tourist which also constitutes health preservation, sports and recovery, medical healing, and aged nursing, integrated and generated from South Asian culture (Pan et al., 2019). Hence, Post pandemic make a big change in the practice and approach of wellness tourism, such as participate in spiritual tourism (M. K. Smith, 2022). Inclusivity, and business resilience are the *prima facia*, and the tourism industry transform itself into a new global economic order characterized by sustainable tourism, society's well-being, climate action, and the involvement of local communities (Sharma, Thomas, & Paul, 2021).

Wellness tourism is not merely defined by the practice of spa or beauty wellness, but also it is largely associated with healing especially mental healing through various measures, such as sound healing (dos Santos, de Oliveira, Tomelin, & Tricárico, 2022; Rocha, Falcó, & Leitão, 2022). Especially, sound healing which is a traditional therapy; it is becoming popular and an effective tool for mental wellness (Goldsby et al., 2022). Poor mood and elevated anxiety are linked to increased incidence of disease, the effects of sound meditation, specifically Tibetan singing bowl meditation, on mood, anxiety, pain, and spiritual well-being (Koncul, 2012). As compared with pre-meditation, following the sound meditation participants reported significantly less tension, anger, fatigue, and depressed mood (Walter & Hinterberger, 2022). Tibetan singing bowl meditation may be a feasible low-cost low technology intervention for reducing feelings of tension, anxiety, and depression, and increasing spiritual well-being (Tsuei, 2022). This meditation type may be especially useful in decreasing tension in individuals who have not previously practiced this form of meditation (Goldsby et al., 2022). In addition, there has been a hidden importance of Himalayan Singing bowl as spiritual and healing therapy. Sound vibrations have a profound impact on the body and the mind with evidence confirming reduced anxiety and increased wellbeing, it is likely reason for relaxation (Landry, 2012).

Furthermore, amongst all the therapeutic measures, the Himalayan Singing Bowls is used for intervention to enhance the individual's emotional & physical wellbeing, may facilitate faster and deeper relaxation as compared to simple, supine relaxation (Trivedi & Saboo, 2019).

The various forms of sound healing such as sound healing is the practice of using sound and listening in a mindful manner to transform and expand consciousness to enhance the body's natural drive to regenerate and heal itself (Tsuei, 2022; Walter & Hinterberger, 2022).



The mechanisms of action underlying the usefulness of sound as a healing/therapeutic agent are derived from the nature and manifestations of vibration and consciousness and the effect of that interaction on energy, matter, and living organisms (Wonders, 2022). Mindful listening, mantra repetition, and other meditative techniques facilitate the ability to quiet or silence the mind. An important part of sound healing practice is to develop basic sound making skills by learning to use different musical instruments and/or sound making materials. Sound healers often use instruments that are easy to learn and control, such as tuning forks, crystal and Himalayan singing bowls, gongs, whistles, didgeridoos, flutes, frame drums, rain sticks and the voice (Beaulieu & Perez-Martinez, 2018).

Spending time in natural environments can benefit health and well-being tremendously but exposure-response relationships are under-researched especially when it is sound therapy. If a tourist who is going for sound healing, merely lying down and listening to the high-intensity, low-frequency combination of singing bowls, gongs, and bells in a sound meditation could induce a deep relaxation response and positively affect mood and sense of well-being (Goldsby et al., 2017).

A number sound healing techniques can be group in six categories, first self-generated sound, projecting sound into the body, sounding the body, listening technologies, healing composition, and sound environments (Crowe & Scovel, 1996). For instance, Australian aboriginal tribes have used the didgeridoo as a sound healing instrument for over 40 000 years (Goldsby et al., 2022). Ancient instruments have also been used for religious and spiritual ceremonies such as Tibetan (also called “Himalayan”) singing bowls (Goldsby et al., 2017). Tibetan singing bowls are metal bowls usually consisting of a combination of metal alloys and originally used by Tibetan monks for spiritual ceremonies (Terwagne & Bush, 2011).

In summary, while sound healing is not a new concept, and it is part of wellness tourism destination development. Significantly, the majority of singing bowl can be related to the physics of these musical instruments, such as the sonic and wave properties, as well as attempting to model the singing bowl’s acoustic characteristics (Burtner, Serafin, & Topper, 2002). Moreover, singing bowls were used for emotional healing with high-risk youth as part of what was termed the best self-visualization method (Tsuei, 2022; Walter & Hinterberger, 2022). The bowls were used in a psychotherapy model in combination with deep breathing, visualization, and a loving kindness meditation. The authors reported that this combination of



healing methods may be a catalyst for emotional and psychological healing in counseling sessions (Schussel & Miller, 2013).

Recommendations for future research

As discuss in this conceptual paper, the future study should aim to research on interesting and important topic:

- Can sound healing be used effectively to positively improve a human's physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health?
- Will sound healing accepted as part of wellness program, such as Yoga, Spa and meditation activity.
- What are the possible effects of singing bowls and sound healing on mood, anxiety, physical pain, and spiritual well-being, and to lay the foundation for a future more formal randomized control trial?



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